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of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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A Hook for Leviathan

THE barbarian peril of our days—whether in literature, art, education, or religion—is standardization, and this is particularly true in the United States, where the interchangeable part for machines and magazines may be said to have been invented. But if protests against the rising tide of mediocrity are to have any weight, they must be intelligent. The European who charges us with universal Babbittry and the native who gives him what few and inaccurate facts he possesses, are both sacrificing truth to rhetoric.

Standardization—whether in machinery or *mores*—is a means to an end. If the means extinguish the end, good-by to literature—and civilization. But though dangerous in a community such as America is now, and Europe soon will become, this means is indispensable; it exists; it must be handled, not denied.

No very subtle observation is required in order to note two exactly opposing currents in American life, a broad and slow, a nervous and quick; the insweep, the out-turn, if you please, of a tide. We present the interesting phenomenon (and have for two centuries) of masses of common people fumbling with keys at door after door of civilization. The civilization was once, of course, the property of a class, and that it was a finer and more precious thing than the masses will ever attain to in our times we may readily admit. Yet there they are, fumbling—rich now, ambitious now, determined to eat better, dress better, read better, live better, and even to think better. A social order that makes no provision for such upward striving is unthinkable because, under the political and economic conditions by which we live, it could not exist. And the provision is inevitably standardization. If the wife of a laborer who has become a capitalist proposes to observe the social decencies which accompany even a modest luxury she must have standards—and where there are a hundred thousand such wives standards must be standardized—in books of etiquette if you please. When some millions who have not read beyond the newspapers, if there, begin to crave fiction, articles, the magazines that supply them successfully will have to be standardized—have been, as a matter of fact, as successfully standardized as the Ford car, with all the advantages, as well as all the disabilities, of standardization. What can go in such a magazine, and what cannot go, are both rigorously defined. It cannot be a medium for literature, though literature may slip into it; it must serve its need, and that need is real and not to be cancelled by idle criticism. The America that is learning to keep its teeth clean, read pretty good books, preserve reasonably good manners, eat properly prepared food, is the America of *The Saturday Evening Post*, *The Ladies Home Journal*," the America of public schools and advertisements. Given a general condition of uplift, and such standardization is inevitable. You cannot begin to civilize all of the people all of the time except by broad methods broadly applied.

But the ignorant foreign observer and the supercilious native overlook the violent reaction which this wholesale culture, thin, weak, diffuse, naturally sets up. In every department of American life it is visible. Not merely are the already civilized protesting against a standard of standardization, but through the last of the opening doors the mob are themselves beginning to stream out in a new atmosphere where taste, individualism, self reliance begin to seem the highest good. Every critic knows this: in music, art, literature, conversation, living, the end-product of American civilization is far richer, more complex, more interesting than twenty years ago, than ten years ago.

Will it prevail? Alas, that is another question. It is always possible that the minority will drop into the maw of the majority and be swallowed without so much as indigestion. This mass culture, this semi-barbarism, is a beast as powerful as the German hordes that swept over the Roman empire, as deadly for civilization as the swarms of the semi-civilized that welled up through the cracks of the classic

(*Continued on page* 818)

A Windy Night

By LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

SHOULD Ellen from the rectory come,
Or from the grey farms Nan or Mark,
Then will they find my house gone dumb,
Drained to the ribs of all but dark.

Ellen, white hyacinth on its stalk,
Knows parish-news from shop to stall;
Smelling of apples, Nan will talk
Of weathers, crops; Mark, not at all.

Not I that shape there in the night,
Slumped down within the knobbed green chair,
That thing left in the fagotlight,
To mumble welcome, stare and stare.

Orion hunts, and with him I
Beyond the pools of ghosts and back;
The Dead troop out as we go by,
And point us down the whirling track.

This Week

"The Conquest of Civilization." Reviewed by *Ellsworth Huntington.*

"Young Men in Love." Reviewed by *Thomas Beer.*

A Group of Short Stories. Reviewed by *Nathalie S. Colby.*

"The Allinghams." Reviewed by *Amy Wellington.*

"The Golden Complex." Reviewed by *Elmer Davis.*

Three Volumes of Humor. Reviewed by *William Rose Benét.*

A Note on George Gissing. By *Christopher Morley.*

Next Week, or Later

Winds of Criticism. By *Percy H. Boynton.*

When Debts Are Politics. By *James W. Angell.*

Xanadu*

By CHAUNCEY B. TINKER

IN the year 1904, being the twenty-fourth of his literary activitity, Mr. Rudyard Kipling gave to the world, under the title, "Traffics and Discoveries," a collection of short stories which, even when judged by the standard set by his own earlier work, are of unusual significance. It was at once noticed that the volume marked the author's growing interest in mysticism, which had here flowered into a beautiful story entitled "They." But, however much concerned with the shadow-land of dreams and hopes and fears, Mr. Kipling still delighted in Pyecroft, steam-engines, the British army, and the progress of science. The title, "Traffics and Discoveries," indeed, announced to those who knew how to interpret that the author thought the two worlds of mysticism and "reality" not irreconcilable. The story of "Mrs. Bathurst" made the moving picture screen into a land of heart's desire, and, on the other hand, a most violently realistic tale proved to be merely a dream.

But one story in the book gave capital offense to many a reader. It was not popular among lovers of sentiment or advocates of realism. That story was "Wireless," one of the earliest efforts to employ the newly-discovered form of telegraphy for literary purposes. Readers recalled at once the author's earlier stories of machinery, ".007" and "The Ship That Found Herself," and assumed that this was but another proof that Mr. Kipling regarded himself as the laureate of applied science. And in a sense they were right, for in the story they found as simple a statement of the *modus operandi* of wireless telegraphy as the world of 1904 had read:

> The Hertzian waves, you see, come out of space from the station that despatches 'em, and all these little particles (the "pinch of dust," or nickel-filings of the coherer) are attracted together—cohere we call it—for just so long as the current passes through them. Now it's important to remember that the current is an induced current. . . . The long and the short of it is that when a current of electricity passes through a wire there's a lot of magnetism present round that wire; and if you put another wire parallel to, and within what we call its magnetic field—why then, the second wire will also become charged with electricity.

* * *

Readers of Mr. Kipling's stories had become accustomed to a flood of mechanical detail like this; but they had not penetrated very far into this particular story before they discovered that the author was less concerned with popular science than with poetry. "Wireless" was as mystical a story as "They," and, indeed, was thought by some to betray an interest in "spiritism." It is not necessary, however, to postulate any theory of psychic control in order to explain the story, but only to realize that the mechanical details are symbolically employed; so that when Kipling writes of the "Powers" that communicate with us, he refers to the Muses rather than to electric waves. In a word, he has written a story setting forth the mystery and the glorious agony of poetic composition. He undertakes to reveal, as it were, the quarry out of which a great poem might have been taken; and by way of illustration he has chosen no less lovely and beloved a poem than "The Eve of St. Agnes." His aim is to show that this lustrous thing,

> Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
> As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked wings,

*The Road to Xanadu. By John Livingston Lowes. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1927. 2 vols. $6.

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is not, in its origins, necessarily inconsistent with the vulgar and reeking accessories of a chemist's shop, where the scene of "Wireless" is laid, with its wealth of soap and scent and cough-medicine. Was not John Keats a druggist? asks Mr. Kipling.

John Shaynor, the hero in whose unconscious mind all the poetic material of a "St. Agnes' Eve" is lying like gold within the ore, is not to be thought of as John Keats himself or even as a reincarnation of Keats, but simply as a young man in whose life there has been enough of experience similar to the poet's, so that, granting a sufficient stimulus from the powers that preside over poetry, a result partially identical with Keats's poetry must necessarily follow. Like causes working upon like materials must produce like results. A consumptive young drug-clerk —not a poet—named Shaynor is in love with Fanny Brown, a young lady of rich physical charms, who is not, to her lover's eye, unlike an opulent female in dove-colored corset who is displayed in the shop-window as an advertisement for a toothwash. Before this pink-and-white picture Shaynor is wont to worship, with a solemn ceremonial all his own, burning incense, when nobody is looking. The incense most easily available to him is Blaudett's Cathedral Pastilles, a cure for hoarseness. He watches the pallid smoke die in the moonlight (or that light cast by the Rosamund jars in the window), and with it his love curls upwards towards the benignant Madonna of his dreams, dimly shadowed forth by the lady in the advertisement. It is from such things, the author hints, that lines in the "Eve" might have arisen, like a flower from the soil:

> His frosted breath,
> Like pious incense from a censer old,
> Seemed taking flight for heaven without a death
> Past the sweet Virgin's picture where his prayer he saith.

* * *

I will not pause to tell the story, or to say, in particular, how Shaynor is brought under the influence of a potent draught, a "new and wildish drink," brewed of cardamoms, ground ginger, chloric ether, and dilute alcohol, how he passes into a trance, and how, with infinite pain yet surpassing satisfaction to himself, he produces lines, phrases, and *disjecta membra* from the "Eve of St. Agnes," and the "Ode to a Nightingale"—poems which he has never heard of. These broken fragments are like the dots and dashes of the telegraphic code. So long as the electricity passes through this particular medium, it causes the little particles, the "dust" of the coherer, to cling together in much the same pattern as had been formed once before when the inspiration of the Muse descended upon John Keats. I am quite certain that Mr. Kipling did not intend his readers to think of these Keatsian phrases as dictated to the young druggist by the soul of Keats, much less to have us regard them as subconscious memories suddenly released; for he tells us definitely that Shaynor had never read Keats. He would have us conceive of these jewelled fragments as created out of the garish glories of the drug-shop as soon as the receiving agent (Shaynor) is put in touch with the transmitting power (the Muse). Allowing, the author seems to tell us, for the force of inspiration, there is nothing incredible in the assumption that the winged miracle that is "The Eve of St. Agnes" might have been constructed out of the drab actualities of life as experienced by a young drug-clerk in the provinces. To illustrate. It is suggested that the famous stanza describing the banquet which Porphyro sets out for Madeline—the tinctures, syrups, the candied apple, quince and plum and gourd, and the rest—might have been woven out of material to be found in Nicholas Culpepper's "English Physician, enlarged with three hundred and sixty-nine Medicines" and in Christie's "New Commercial Plants."

Now the significance of Mr. Kipling's analysis is that it is made by one who is himself a poet. From you, dear reader, or from me, the story would not be of equal importance. Mr. Kipling, whatever we may think of his ultimate literary standing, is a past master in the art of transmuting crude detail into the enduring fabric of art. He has, as often elsewhere, given the solution of his story in the verses which preface it:

> Go and gather
> Out of my garden a cabbage leaf.
> You will find on it whorls and clots of
> Dull grey eggs that, properly fed,
> Turn, by way of the worm, to lots of
> Radiant Psyches raised from the dead.

What, then, according to this view, are the conditions prerequisite to the miracle of the artist, this fusing and remoulding of the crude ore of existence? What of the chrysalis out of which Psyche is to be raised?

In the first place, there must be the raw material, a human mind stored with images and perceptions having form and color and magnetism. Such a storehouse is replenished by a fascinated attention (like a baby's) to the sheer wonder of the material world. Such attention will find beauty anywhere, for it has the gift

> To see a world in a grain of sand,
> And a heaven in a wild flower,
> Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And eternity in an hour.

In a half lemon (not the most poetic of fruits) a poet's eye will see a sky of living yellow light, sphere beyond sphere. The violet and purple and grey and mauve of a cluster of grapes are a veritable "purple land" to the eye of a Dutch painter; as to the eye of John Shaynor the crimson jars in the shop-window, advertising that a druggist does business within, may be even as flawless jewels of Ormus and of Ind.

* * *

But this power—call it a passion rather—for seeing beauty in the select detail of a sordid world can wreak itself upon expression only when it comes into conjunction with some higher Power than itself which bridles and controls it like helmeted Bellerophon. It seizes details at will (and, it may seem, at random) from the sunken treasury of impressions and recollections that have been accumulating for untold time. The overmastering Spirit sweeps through the poet's little world with plastic stress,

> Torturing the unwilling dross that checks its flight
> To its own likeness.

Imprinted upon the poem which results there will remain traces of the details which, in the creative process, have been seized upon and fused into it—traces whose origin may or may not be clear to the poet and may or may not be clear to the critic. It is not always easy to detect the sand-speck at the heart of the pearl.

The most familiar illustration of this selective and transforming process is the use made by painters and sculptors of dull and commonplace sights. As I write, my eye falls on a small picture of Honoré Daumier, the original of which is in the Phillips Gallery in Washington, such as Whistler would have entitled, "A Nocturne." It represents a mother and a little girl crossing a bridge over the Seine early in the evening. By what divination does the artist see a tender loveliness in a woman carrying a laundry basket and dragging a tired child across a bridge? Yet the loveliness, quiet beauty merging with quiet dignity, is indubitably there. The long day's task is done. Twilight falls over Paris and the river, and gives itself up to the faintly-luminous night. It is Daumier's "Ode to Evening."

What beauty have not artists thus lent to stables and taverns, to theatrical dressing-rooms and thieves' kitchens? They have shed beauty on ballet-dancers and jockeys, sots at their dice and hermits at their prayers; on capering clodhoppers, dirty children, the street-walker and the beach-comber, drunkard and absinthe-slave, quack, mountebank, gipsy, beggar-boy, chiropodist, barber, milkmaid, cobbler, and bandit. More marvellous is the miracle of "still life," where the painted image has a beauty that surpasses even the object represented—flowers, fruit, vegetables, dead game, lobsters, oysters, bread-crumbs, wine-glasses, maps, Oriental rugs, copper kettles, brooms, rubbish, broken meats, and whole sides of beef hung up in butcher-shops. For it is the first law of the fine arts that nothing shall be called common or unclean.

* * *

The primary endowment of the poet as of the painter, then, is "the seeing eye," or "the falcon eye," as Professor Lowes in his new book has it; for it is from his perceptive power that a stream of radiant images is constantly poured into the hidden storehouse of his memories. These are the chaotic stuff on which the Muse is to operate, as the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. For artists do not work *in vacuo*. Scene or model or recollection they must have before the eye or the eye of the mind. It is, as Mr. Lowes insists, a ludicrous mistake to fancy that the Shaping Spirit creates "in some thaumaturgic fashion out of nothing its visionary world."

Now if our pleasure in a work of art is to rise above a mere naïve wonder at it, there must be profit and, for that matter, a subtler wonder, in learning some of the stages in the process by which it came to be. Ruskin, it is said, visited many of the spots where Turner had painted, and set himself to sketch the very scene that had met the eye of the master, not that he might find other beauties there, but simply to come to a fuller realization of the genius of the painter. So also the examination of the raw stuff out of which a great poem has been fashioned almost invariably increases one's admiration and even one's reverence for it. Who thinks any the less of Shakespeare when he has come to know the poet's "sources"?

* * *

In Professor Lowes's study of the origins of "The Ancient Mariner" and of "Kubla Khan," we have an illustration of the creative process as startling as the imaginary one with which this paper began. As a result of traversing the same ground as Coleridge in his reading, Mr. Lowes has found the very "particles" which cohered to form, when fused, the fabric of "The Ancient Mariner" and "Kubla Khan." It is hardly too much to say that the origin of everything has been determined—the wedding guest, the loud bassoon, the albatross, the polar ice, the equatorial sun, the rotting deep, the skeleton ship, Death and Life-in-Death, the hidden brook, the journeying moon with a star astray in her nether tip, the writhing sea-snakes, the water burning like a witch's oils, the noises in a swound, the splitting icebergs. Most of the details are lying in the dust of those fine old "Voyages" of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, of which Coleridge had been, from boyhood, an ardent lover. He had, roughly, "read them all." It has been known from the beginning, that "The Ancient Mariner" derived in part from Captain George Shelvocke's "Voyage 'Round the World," but to his influence must now be added that of Dampier, Hawkins, Cook, Bruce, Bartram, Bourzes, Falconer, and scores of others.

* * *

But it is not by laying reminiscence upon reminiscence and line upon line that the creative task is accomplished. The images residing in the dark vaults of memory are not to be conceived as inert and lifeless, like the bits of stone made into a mosaic. Since they are part of a living soul, they develop, unite, transform themselves, and, in general, change in a surprising fashion. It is as though the atoms of memory were provided with links or hooks which catch and hold one another in casual but enduring union. Or, to use Mr. Kipling's metaphor, it is as though the particles, in response to a hidden and mysterious force operating upon them, clung together in some dark "coherer." This magnetic and assimilative tendency among the atoms of memory is one of the chief marks of creative power in a poet, as its functioning is the second stage in the poetic process, if that may be called a stage which must be thought of as going on all the time.

The most important illustration of this strange assimilation among the details of memory is Mr. Lowes's discovery that the Mariner himself is, in one of his aspects, the Wandering Jew. Like the Jew, the Mariner is a supernatural being:

> I pass like night from land to land,
> I have strange power of speech.

But, in another aspect, he is not unlike the guilty and branded Cain, himself a wanderer. Now these two figures, by the alchemy of the mind, merge with such intrepid sailors as those who first passed the Straits of Magellan, and those who, rounding the Horn, first gazed upon the southern waters of the Pacific. "We were the first who ever burst into that silent sea." The Jew, the murderer, and the sailor—wayfarers all—are, alike, familiar with disaster and despair. All have known utter loneliness. What is common to them all, the greatest common divisor, so to speak, rises in the poet's mind as an individual—one who has offended the Powers of the air and is doomed (like Cain) to a life of remorse and expiation and (like the Jew) to endless wandering. He is not Cain, he is not the Jew, he is no historical sailor; he is a new being. And yet his words and his actions betray his relationship with those out of whose loins he came.

No less amazing is the discovery that the "sacred river" of "Kubla Khan," thrown up, 'mid dancing rocks, from a dark, romantic chasm, is the result of a confluence of the Egyptian Nile with

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the Greek Alphæus! The former, then and now a sacred river, was once thought to rise in Eden, as one of the four rivers of Paradise. It was held to flow underground, forming a vast subterranean sea. It emerged at last among the mountains of Abyssinia, to which distant land James Bruce went in search of the sources of the Nile. But the Nile was not the only river which was known to have flowed under ground, and even under sea. Alphæus, too, plunged underground to mingle his waters with those of Arethusa in another land. At some moment or other he became associated with the Nile in Coleridge's memory, and when the deeps of that vast memory were broken up in the act of poetic creation, he leaped to the surface as Alph, the sacred river. And so it is with the other details of the story—the sunless sea, the Abyssinian maid, the caves of ice, the dome in air, the floating hair, the flashing eyes, the bounding rocks—all, in their origin, issued from the poet's amazingly discursive reading, and all underwent a sea-change within the caverns of his mind, "into something rich and strange."

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But what of the Imagination Creatrix, the Power (as Mr. Kipling has it), the Muse? Of the final stage of creation, the act itself, we can know but little. The creative force becomes, like all other first principles, the more mysterious the more it is considered.

If the artist be believed, at the moment of vision, the *disjecta membra* of his work to be, the meditations and perceptions of a lifetime, fall in an instant into order and significance. Venus rises from the wave. Heaven is open before his very gaze. If the poet can perpetuate what he hears and sees in that happy moment, he has produced a work of genius. But the task is not simple. All may fade like a mirage. On the other hand, it may endure so clearly before him that words and power seem to come uncalled for, and the work to grow by some mysterious power within itself.

In a story popular among schoolboys, it is related that when King Hiero demanded of Archimedes to know the amount of silver alloy in his golden crown, the mathematician pondered long over the problem, which eluded him persistently. But one day when stepping into the bath, he noted how the water overflowed as his body was gradually immersed, and at once the whole significance of his problem and its solution surged over him. He ran from the bath crying aloud in his exultation. The poet, too, has his moments of illumination, which come, often enough, in response to a seemingly trivial incident. Much that has been slowly growing and changing in the poet's mind comes, at that instant, into order and significance. At such a moment Coleridge saw the entire poem, "Christabel."

> I had the whole present to my mind (he says) with the wholeness, no less than with the liveliness of a vision.

The tragic misfortune of Coleridge's imaginative life was that such visions were as brief as they were lovely. Once shattered, he could not reconstruct them.

In reducing his vision to terms intelligible to human beings, there is need for the controlling power of the mind. The rational powers of his ordinary state are not useless to the poet, but serve to bring the work to its final stage of smooth perfection. Coleridge revised "The Ancient Mariner" in considerable detail, as Rossetti revised "The Blessed Damozel." In both cases the rational mind lent new beauties to work which the imagination had struck out. So delectable a thing as the prose "rubric" of "The Ancient Mariner" appears first some nineteen years after the composition of the poem.

But if the poet fail to perpetuate what he has seen in its beauty, if the vision fade, and leave not a rack behind, as it did before Coleridge could complete "Kubla Khan," then indeed is he left forlorn, like the knight in "La Belle Dame sans Merci," alone and palely loitering, with a consuming desire at the heart of him, which is not to be assuaged.

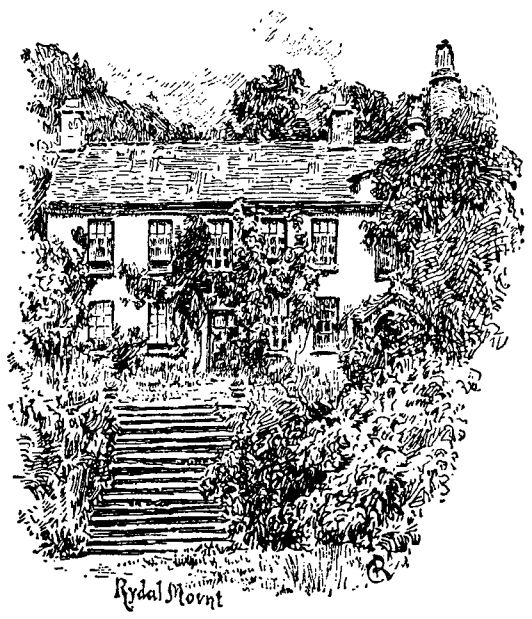
The fifth annual exhibition of the fifty books of the year by the American Institute of Graphic Arts is being held in the gallery of the Grolier Club and will be open to the public from 10 to 6, except Sundays, to June first inclusive. Members of the Grolier Club and of the Institute attended the private opening view.

The Evolution of Mankind

By Ellsworth Huntington
Author of "Civilization and Climate"

BOOKS designed for general reading are often used as textbooks, but it is rare for a volume designed as a textbook to be reprinted for general reading. Only unusual merit can warrant such a fate. Ten years after Professor James H. Breasted's "Ancient Times" appeared as a textbook, it is reprinted with only slight changes as "The Conquest of Civilization." A similar transformation gives us Professor James H. Robinson's "Medieval and Modern Times" as a companion reprint entitled "The Ordeal of Civilization." Both books impress the reader by their clear, vivid style, their interesting narratives, and the authors' broad, deep grasp of their subjects. Those are the qualities which make the books worth republishing for general reading. That the increased circulation which thus comes to them is well deserved can scarcely be questioned.

When Professor Breasted gave his book its new title, he doubtless meant the "attainment" rather than the "conquest" of civilization, but his main idea is clear. He is dealing with the great story of how man became civilized during the vast period which began with the first crude use of stones and sticks in human hands, and ended with the decline of the Roman Empire. The title of Professor Robinson's book needs little explanation. "The Ordeal of Civilization" deals with the onslaughts upon progress which have characterized the history of Europe from the Dark Ages down to the World War.



Rydal Mount, the home of Wordsworth at which Coleridge was a constant visitor.

With these two books we may well consider another which covers precisely the same ground in a single volume. Professor Lynn Thorndike's "Short History of Civilization" is also a textbook—and a very good one—but it is not likely ever to be reprinted for general reading. Its contents differ from those of the others just as does its title. It is very reliable and comprehensive, but lacks the swing and rhythm which give the others a distinct literary style.

Every history of civilization ought to include certain great subjects such as political events, migrations, wars, literature, religion and science. Hence it seems fair to choose certain such subjects and test our three books by seeing how far each gives a satisfactory treatment along these specific lines. Let us begin with language in its mechanical aspects. By this I mean the origin of speech, its diversification into dialects and languages, the methods of substituting the eye for the ear and of preserving ideas for future generations by means of hieroglyphics, letters, tablets, manuscripts, printing, books and the like, and the methods of disseminating thought by means of the postal service, the telegraph, and other modern devices. That the importance of all this is recognized by historians appears in Breasted's statement that "the invention of writing and of a convenient system of records on paper has had a greater influence in uplifting the human race than any other intellectual achievement in the career of man. It was more important than all the battles ever fought and all the constitutions ever devised." This statement would be still more fully justified if the author, like the reviewer, had been thinking not only of the invention of the alphabet and of our whole system of permanent records including the art of printing and the modern newspaper, but of all other methods of transferring ideas from one person to another. That would lead us to consider not only how the spoken word originated, but how it has differed from age to age, how it has influenced men through oratory, and how in our day its influence has been enhanced by means of the telephone, wireless, and phonograph, while moving pictures have achieved a truly phenomenal success as a method of preserving and disseminating facts and ideas.

If speech, language, and the written word are so extremely important, our historians ought surely to deal with them very fully. In "The Conquest of Civilization," however, practically nothing is said about how speech originated or developed into languages. Nor is there much attempt to show how differences of language have influenced the progress of civilization. The subject of writing is introduced with eight excellent pages dealing with picture writing and hieroglyphics. Vivid descriptions of the decipherment of the hieroglyphics of Egypt by means of the Rosetta Stone and of the cuneiform documents of Mesopotamia by means of the tri-lingual inscriptions of Darius the Great are also included. Here and there we find little references, or even a page or two, as to how one nation borrowed an alphabet from another, as when the Aramæans and Greeks borrowed from the Phœnicians. A photograph of a rock-carving illustrates how the Assyrian scribes did their work; and we are told not only about the origin of the postal system in Assyria, but how at a later date the Persian postal system introduced hens to western Asia and thus to Europe. But all this is incidental. There is little or no conscious attempt to trace the origin, development and influence of the art of communication. Libraries receive similar treatment. The famous library of Assurbanipal and the clay tablets which took the form of dictionaries are mentioned, but the results arising by reason of the collection of books and manuscripts are not thoroughly elaborated even when the libraries of Greece and Alexandria are discussed. The author is mainly interested in such topics as the decipherment of the Hittite language with its two forms of writing, cuneiform, which has recently been deciphered, and hieroglyphic, which is not yet understood. All in all, more than one page in twenty of "The Conquest of Civilization" is devoted to speech and language in one form or another, but battles like Armageddon are interpreted more fully than is the effect of writing upon the development of human culture.

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In "The Ordeal of Civilization," language is treated more briefly than in "The Conquest of Civilization." Charlemagne's attempt to copy and preserve old manuscripts is indeed described in an interesting fashion. There is an excellent discussion of the medieval use of Latin, and of the way in which a learned and a vulgar language prevailed side by side for centuries until Latin was finally eliminated. Equally good are the six pages on methods of making written books, especially manuscripts, before printing was invented. Even the ordinary college student ought to be interested in reading that when the papyrus supply was cut off by the Moslem conquest of Egypt, the skin of lambs and goats in the form of parchment took its place, while the Moslems themselves introduced paper which became common in the 13th and 14th centuries. But one is surprised to find that the invention of printing is not much more than mentioned. This corresponds with the fact that the author actually apologizes for mentioning a change of dynasty, even though the change was from the Merovingians to the family of Charlemagne.

Professor Robinson's primary interest is in the human mind, and one of his main objects is to get away from the dynasties, dates, and wars of the standard histories of the past. This would lead one to expect a full discussion of newspapers and of the spread of modern means of propaganda and advertising, but these things receive slight attention. Even the post office, telegraph, telephone and wireless are all condensed into two paragraphs. The

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THE CONQUEST OF CIVILIZATION. By James H. Breasted. New York: Harper & Bros. 1926. $5.

THE ORDEAL OF CIVILIZATION. By James H. Robinson. The same.

A SHORT HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION. By Lynn Thorndyke. New York: F. S. Crofts & Co. 1926. $5.

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most curious feature is that the last chapter of "The Ordeal of Civilization" contains an admirable résumé wherein the historic events leading to the printing of a modern book are sketched most tellingly. This far transcends anything that is said about the matter in the body of the book, but curiously enough it is not an end in itself. It is designed merely to bring home to the conceited American the paucity of his own contribution to human progress. Finally, on almost the last page we find the statement that our present civilization is based on paper and printing, but the twenty pages or so which the author devotes to speech, language, printing, and the other arts whereby information is disseminated, suggest that this conclusion was not consciously in mind while "The Ordeal of Civilization" was being written.

* * *

Professor Thorndike's book is quite different. From beginning to end it contains systematic paragraphs or pages devoted to language. At the beginning we read about the large vocabularies and elaborate grammatical and phonetic systems of primitive languages. It is suggested that flints, cave pictures and the like may be even older than language. In the discussion of hieroglyphic writing and of the origin of the alphabet, Professor Thorndike follows the same lines as Professor Breasted, but with a greater wealth of exact detail and a much smaller allotment of the vivid description which stirs the imagination. So it goes all the way through. The origin of the Indo-European languages is set forth, their spread by migration is considered, the method of handing down the Homeric poems is elaborated. Everywhere there appears to be a conscious attempt to give a full and systematic account of the language of each country and of how its characteristics have helped or hindered the expression of ideas and emotions. Nevertheless Thorndike devotes only about one page in thirty to this topic, thereby falling about half-way between Breasted and Robinson.

The most interesting phase of the matter is not the amount of space that the different authors devote to the subject, but the way in which they treat it. Professor Breasted is interested in the mechanical processes by which the art of writing was originally evolved and has been elaborated through the centuries. Whenever he touches the matter he discusses it with an enthusiasm which arouses our interest. Nevertheless he does not treat it systematically, and appears to be unconscious of the fact that large tracts of the subject are untouched. Professor Robinson, on the other hand, has little or no interest in the mechanical processes which are necessary if speech and language are to be effective means of advancing or altering civilization. What he is interested in is the effect which any given change, when once made, produces upon human thought. He concentrates therefore upon the mental rather than the material elements of the case. Professor Thorndike, with still a different type of mind, is mainly interested in setting the whole thing forth systematically. He is interested in both causes and effects, but he is still more interested in mentioning everything that ought to be mentioned. His is the book to which one would turn for exact information, but it does not thrill one with the desire to make a discovery as does Professor Breasted's account of Oriental inscriptions, nor does it send one's mind roaming far into the future as does Professor Robinson's vision of what man may be if only his mind evolves sufficiently.

* * *

In preparing this review I undertook to investigate the attitude of our three authors toward health and tools, as well as language, but there is no space left to discuss these topics. Their treatment displays the same characteristics that we have already discussed. Health, for example, is treated as fully and conscientiously as language in Professor Thorndike's book; it is practically neglected in Professor Robinson's; while in Professor Breasted's it receives a little attention—nothing like so much as it warrants. Naturally tools occupy a large place in Professor Breasted's book because he deals with the origins of civilization. Professor Robinson has equally good reason for discussing the evolution of tools into machines, for he deals with the great industrial evolution during which machines nearly enslaved the nations of the West. But after all they are merely mechanical appliances, and therefore, to Professor Robinson, nothing like so interesting as the evolution of personal character in the conduct of Napoleon.

To sum up the whole thing, one feels that Professor Thorndike has very painstakingly and assiduously gathered the facts from a vast variety of sources; he has catalogued them very neatly by some sort of up-to-date filing system, and he sets them before the reader impartially. Professor Breasted, on the contrary, has not read so much or made such a neat and full card catalogue, but has himself gathered a great body of facts at first hand during his years of investigation in the East. He writes with special enthusiasm concerning the things that he himself knows, and fills in the rest to make a complete story. Professor Robinson has not read so much as Professor Thorndike, nor investigated so much as Professor Breasted, but he has spent more time in quiet thinking as to what it all means. Each of these three types of mind is eminently desirable in an historian. Would that all three could be combined!

Positively Laughable

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MARTHA HEPPLETHWAITE. By FRANK SULLIVAN. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927. $2.

THE STORY OF A WONDER MAN. Being the Autobiography of Ring Lardner. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. $1.75.

THE EARLY WORM. By ROBERT BENCHLEY. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I MUST first mention a painful discrepancy between these avowedly humorous volumes. Mr. Lardner's volume costs only one dollar and seventy-five cents, while the volumes of Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Benchley both cost two dollars,—I mean, apiece. Mr. Lardner is cutting the ground right from under their feet. Then, again, I don't know Mr. Lardner (though I met him once at a wedding—ha! ha!—too funny!) and I do know both Mr. Benchley and Mr. Sullivan. (That is, every time they see me they laugh.) So this review is just going to be a lot of log-rolling, you can be sure of that.

Mr. Sullivan's volume has been on my desk now for some time. I had a couple of dozen good hearty smiles out of it. But lately I have been serious. But I have noticed that the volume is getting a little dog-eared. This has been caused by its having been frequently removed and replaced by miscreants who shall be nameless. They get thumbmarks all over it. But it hasn't got dusty.

Mr. Benchley's volume has just come in. Mr. Lardner's volume is minus its jacket. I wish people wouldn't throw the jackets of my books away, that shall be nameless. Mr. Benchley has the best illustrator, Gluyas Williams. Mr. Lardner's illustrator is quite nice too, though,—Margaret Freeman. Both of these illustrators draw recognizable portraits of Mr. Benchley and Mr. Lardner,—the big—! Milt Gross drew Mr. Sullivan's jacket for him, but made no pictures for the interior. This makes the book pretty tough reading until you get into the spirit of it. And where he takes up the Hall-Mills case in terms of solar eclipses his argument can hardly be called cogent. In fact he never is cogent. That is what I like about him.

Now these three young men are pretty amusing fellows. In America we have a term for such goings on. We call them humorists. Another generation would have called them plain liars. I should call them fancy. I should call them pretty darn good at embellished prevarication. Yet it is saddening. You really can't trust them. You trot along beside them, innocently, half-heartedly, your small sticky hand in theirs, gazing up at them with that devoted dog-like expression in your large round eyes,—and then they suddenly begin to tell you things that just aren't so. I know my mother wouldn't like me to tell stories like that.

* * *

Take for instance Mr. Lardner. He is playing dead in his book. He has this Miss Sarah E. Spooldripper write a foreword for him. She is Martha Hepplethwaite's second cousin. I happen to know that Mr. Lardner met she and Miss Hepplethwaite in the company of Mr. Sullivan at Robert Henri's. Her and Mr. Lardner framed this thing between them. He isn't either dead.

Then take what Mr. Lardner says about coach Tad Jones shouting at Heffelfinger, "You didn't clean your nails this morning!" I know to the contrary. It was Mike Murphy and Percy Haughton. Every Yale man knows that. And, as a matter of actual fact, Lardner never played for Yale. He was a ringer for Forest Hills in the big 1905 game between Swarthmore and Syracuse. As for his "football trick uncorked"—huh! It was Tom Shevlin of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who deflated the ball,—and, what is little known today, the manufacturers never refunded the money.

It's like that all the way through. For instance, he says "Helsh was a wealthy barn tearer in Pennsylvania. He went all over the state tearing down barns so the horses could get more air." Now Mr. Lardner has just heard this somewhere, and, his ear not being very exact for the *nuances* of the American language, has confused the words "terror" and "tearer." Helsh was actually known as "the barn terror." This title was given to him because of his *penchant* for making faces at such outbuildings. He could make such perfectly horrible faces that the barns always fell apart. But it wasn't on account of the horses. Besides, with the new strides that have been made in barn ventilation (See "Barns and Barning," by Barney, 4th Edition. Peebles & Whitt: Altoona), why, the thing is perfectly ridiculous upon the face of it.

Mr. Benchley errs likewise. A very flagrant instance is his remark that "That night Burling Nabgratz disappeared and was never seen again in Wallack." That simply isn't true. There is a Gurling Naplatz living today in Wallack. If it isn't the same Banbatz, at least it is a Purling. And Leon Nabgratz was *not* an old garbler. Wasn't either!

These writers are not historically accurate. I think it is high time that some one came out flat-footed and said he didn't believe them. There is a Humorists' Dictatorship going on in New York City that I really don't see any end to. Every time I knock at Mr. Benchley's room at the Shelton he is dictating, and everybody in Great Neck knows how much Mr. Lardner dictates. Mr. Sullivan, in fact, gives the whole show away, asking Miss Hepplethwaite to "take a letter" right in the beginning of his book.

I suppose they think it's funny.

Another humorist I know is Marc Connelly. He is rather a nice, kind old man with a beard. But he writes plays. Another humorist I know is Donald Ogden Stewart. He is a nice, kind old man with a goitre. But he writes movies. So all we have left are Mr. Lardner, Mr. Benchley, and Mr. Sullivan. They are all perfectly crazy.

They are all perfectly grand.

A Hook for Leviathan

(*Continued from page* 815)

world and drowned a society as well organized as our own.

This is the danger. This is Moloch. This is the Beast of the Apocalypse. This is Mammon. This is the Twilight of the Gods when the clumsy Giants take possession of the earth.

Why waste time and breath then in shrill and anæmic complaints against a process of world education inevitable in our economy? Those who bewail high efficiency of standardization would do better to put their energy into works of light and leading. A hundred critics shouting "Down with Babbitt" are not worth one poem, one novel, one play, which represents all that Babbitt is not, but may very possibly desire to be. A little less recrimination, please, and a little better example! With more real books, a better education, and a few great men, standardization may be trusted to take care of itself.

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Notes on Megalopolis

YOUNG MEN IN LOVE. By MICHAEL ARLEN. New York: George H. Doran. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS BEER

Author of "The Mauve Decade"

MR. MICHAEL ARLEN so lazily and politely disarms criticism with the first page of his new book that "Young Men in Love" cannot honorably be reviewed as a novel, although this essay on the creation of smart fiction takes that form. It is useful as an item in Dr. Oswald Spengler's course on the decline of the West, and Mr. Arlen is to be conceived as a lecturer in a pleasant clinic, explaining dead substances of this organism to students who are permitted to smoke cigarettes during his demonstration. I'm reminded of Professor Thomas Dwight Goodell's voice wearily drawling, in the autumn of 1907, "Gentlemen, a civilization is the summary of its preceding culture. . . . The word civilization is really ominous, as it implies that the racial energy can rise no higher. . . . Modern civilization suggests the Hellenic civilization of the second century B.C. . . . As I am dismissing you early, please make no noise on the stairs. . . ."

This megalopolis in which Mr. Arlen's figurines move embraces Hollywood, California, as well as London and Paris. It suggests the Hellenic civilization of the second century B.C. as it is mathematical, skeptical, and sentimental. Its skepticism turns on the vital tissues of enterprise; its sentiment is largely expended on matters of lust and decoration; its mathematical problem is that of the salesroom. How can a book be made to "go big"? How, O how, to pass the 40,000 and be a best-seller? Dr. Spengler would go looking vainly through "Young Men in Love" for a Faustian soul. He might pick up some traces of an Apollonian soul in Jasper Vardon's second mistress, and the general philosophy is what may be called classical. We are here and now. There is no infinity. There is no particular past. It is all present. Bodies hold in so many emotions and express them in so many attitudes. This civilization summarizes a preceding culture, and that culture, as this Oriental islander sees it, has not taught the megalopolitans much of anything. They move with no more intellectual direction than do the fruit pickers of Mr. Totheroh's honest "Wild Orchard," and their aims are no higher than those of Californian peasants.

* * *

Mr. Arlen's method in this instructive essay is one that Henry James employed strikingly in "The Bostonians." He posterizes. His figurines advance with witty descriptive labels on their hollow chests. The Earl of Mount Wyroc—and is that not a nice name?—the Earl of Mount Wyroc is rude, conservative, a Papist, and an amateur gardener. Mr. Arlen knows—we all know—that the megalopolitan mind is too impatient to break into anything; it must have its ideas and entertainments predigested for it. So he does not let the Earl of Mount Wyroc reveal himself to your intelligence but swiftly posters him and sets him to work discharging epigrams in the mode of 1892, although one of them bloomed in musical comedy of 1920 in the form: "She ain't a lady, she's a telephone number. . . ." Sometimes the posterizing process is admirable, as in the case of Ysabel Fuller who was "the most deplorable of all Europeans, an American who thinks Oscar Wilde the greatest writer in the world. . . ." But the method, finally, is critical and not creative beyond the use James made of it, say, in his sketch of Selah Tarrant, where a narrative is cleverly involved with the labels.

We are in Megalopolis and everything is labelled. Even the motor cars have appetizing, megalopolitan names—Rolls-Royce, Renault, Vauxhall, and Hispano-Suiza. The characters are numbers in high social comedy. Tap this button and up comes the ruthless, philosophical Jewish millionaire, or this one and you get the mediocre politician, with mistress, or this one and the ruined gentleman who just would admit he'd cheated at cards comes bobbing out of the toybox. A light from Hollywood is cast eastward upon Brook Street and Trafalgar Square; Charles Savile, disenchanted maker of best-sellers, who has really been to Hollywood, finds his ideal woman in Venetia Vardon and we are told how "he bowed over the bride of his dreams," and that gives you a seat in the Egyptian theatre at Hollywood, watching a shadow with glazed hair bow over the bride of his dreams to the music of "Les Millions d'Arlequin" or, "Nur eine Nacht sollst Du mir Gehören." And as we are in megalopolis young Raphael Sass brings a monstrous diamond for the seduction of Ysabel Fuller, and Ysabel puts a cigarette greasy with paint from her lips into Charles Savile's mouth. This summary of preceding cultures includes a rhapsody on the telephone as love's messenger "begging him to finger her dear nightgown of chiffon, which is a common French name for the breath of pearls and through which, as she lies at ease in the sovereign privacy of her bedchamber, the hapless fellow must look upon the soft white breasts that he may not touch and the delicious shadows that he may not explore. . . ."

Has there been any modulation forward from the mood in which figurines of the Wilde-Ouida-Benson-Hichens-Pinero tribe played this exacerbating game? Yes, because megalopolis admits, nowadays, that it is not wicked to sleep with one's friend's daughter or wife. Mr. Arlen presents us with a fanciful image of an "inner set" that knows all about these things and takes them, until the essayist has to make a climax, very philosophically. But his men seeking power and his men seeking love are not in any genuine way different from the figurines of the elder school. Metropolis has merged with megalopolis. London is a trifle less insular by reason of Hollywood and a faster boat service on the channel. But it is merely megalopolis, after all. *Rien que la terre, mais la terre est si, si petite, messieurs!* Nothing very large rattles in these heads and nothing very gay or very cruel is said about their feebleness and their earthen vulgarity. . . . As I am dismissing you early, please make no noise on the stairs.

MICHAEL ARLEN

From a Miniature by Margaret Foote Hawley

Simultaneous Differences

THE BEST STORIES OF MARY E. WILKINS. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1927. $2.

MOTHER KNOWS BEST. By EDNA FERBER. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927. $2.50.

PRETTY CREATURES. By WILLIAM GERHARDI. New York: Duffield & Co. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by NATHALIE SEDGWICK COLBY

THESE three books can be assembled momentarily in one sentence because of their Easter covers—after that they will travel separate roads. For Miss Wilkins's lens is not Miss Ferber's and we suspect that Mr. Gerhardi has his fashioned in a monocle.

Survivors of the "nineties" will remember the thrill when Miss Wilkins's brush first put New England on the color map of short stories—her canvas, the grey of November skies, streaked with the pastel shades of sunset only rarely deepening to a primal color. Underneath the Puritan façade of speechlessness, self-preservation made right and wrong the creed of Miss Wilkins's characters part of their defensive tissue. Pioneer conflict handed down rigidities of conduct as their tradition. "I guess you find I shan't fret much over a married man," Lily says to Joe from whom she is separated (in "A New England Nun"), by his pallid engagement to another woman. For Joe has given his word and it must bind them both.

Right and wrong dominate life and death as well as love. When Old Woman Magoun's grandchild is menaced by her father, her grandmother conducts her to a bush of deadly night shade, "Come Lily, it's time you were going," she says with biblical sparseness, "I guess you've set long enough." Lily dies, her life sacrificed to her chastity and her grandmother's anguish rising to an ecstasy, the Bible speech surges up above the border of consciousness and the New England woman becomes apocryphal—"You will come to a gate with all the colors of a rainbow, it will open and you will go right up a gold street . . . " she chants in an epic eloquence that is like the wound of the red sun on the line of New England hills.

In the winnowing of her descriptions Miss Wilkins is herself of New England. "In the sky was faintly visible a filmy arc of new moon. A great star was slowly gathering light near it," she says, taking us by a short cut into her November night. . . . Beauty is here in this book, walking beside the characters in their rut of drudgery, beauty which we get as love. Not love of sudden emotion but love as the long miracle—trellissing in and out of the cumulative common-place of daily living, until it becomes part of the finished pattern. "Why, mother," an old man says in "The Revolt of Mother," facing himself at the end of life's journey, "I hadn't no idee you was so set on't as all this come to."

Yes, there's beauty in this book aplenty, but not rapture. For rapture is nature's technique! reality escaping in spite of the author through a sudden rift of life, sharp as an arrow to the heart.

* * *

More than a quarter of a century lies between these stories and Edna Ferber's book. The stern puritan god has passed. His place is badly taken by the unrelieved clutch of circumstance. We find Miss Ferber's characters in a civilization where the jungle greed of the beast has been urbanized into the gnawing of the daily grind. No unseen drama plays about this modern jungle. There are no stars set in vastness. No rapture, sublimated from experience, do her characters ever gather for a moment in a pattern—calling it God.

It is in this absence of the spiritual equivalent that the difference lies between Miss Wilkins's stories and "Mother Knows Best," which Miss Ferber's publishers refer to as a book of small novels all bound together. Because of the admirable vigor of her writing, it is to be regretted that Miss Ferber could not expand them to the confines of that definition, and condensation has crowded rather than deepened her effects. For Miss Ferber has gallantly resolved not to eliminate to scale, and in the limits of a short story we have the details of a novel pounded like a gong upon our nerves.

In "Every Other Thursday" we are told of . . . "the whole ravishing outfit; Alice-blue dress; blue coat lined with sand crêpe and trimmed with embroidery and edged with a collar of fur; Alice-blue silk hat; beige silk stockings, very sheer; strapped slippers." And in the next paragraph is "A handkerchief, edged with blue lace. A small flask of perfume. A pocket comb that cunningly folded up on itself."

In "Blue Blood" the same thing is told us in the same words, till we must acquiesce before mere massiveness. On page 153, ". . . there was hidden deep, a strong vein of the romantic in this silent, handsome, brooding, moody hog driver." On page 261, ". . . all the young ladies are drawn by his looks, his indifference, his silence." On page 263, ". . . he is serious, quiet, secretly romantic, etc." So we get Denny in "Blue Blood" infinitely magnified as Miss Ferber sees him. Get him and all the other characters as is always the case where there is a middleman, existing in relation to circumstance rather than to each other. For Miss Ferber doesn't let them act themselves for a minute.

"There they were [in "Classified"], the five of them in a five-room flat. Parlor, front bedroom, back bedroom, dining room, kitchen. No escape for these people we feel, going on to more of the same kind in 'Holiday,' where 'Carrie cuts loose a bit and ordered hors-d'œuvres of sea food, braised celery, shad roe, chocolate meringue. Things I don't get at home.' "

No escape for these people, but the momentary elusion of youth's love, as when "Ting went some-

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thing like a bell . . ." in Hannah—one of "Our Very Best People"; and we see her poised in a moment's happy insanity, only too sure that she will sink again into inevitable drabness.

Miss Ferber can show us her characters so that we know them too well and yet part from them as strangers. No half told people these, leaving the reader to complete them with a personal reverberation. "This is my life," masses of readers will say. But until the feeling comes, "This is my life as I have never seen it, lifted by some ray of magic into the universal and so dropped across the threshhold of my consciousness," can it be really theirs?

Away from a Puritan god, away from circumstance, we move into Mr. Gerhardi's "Pretty Creatures." Life is not so serious after all, as we watch mountains, hotels, cafés used as spring-boards to psychological situations. After Miss Wilkins and Edna Ferber, we plane deliciously in Mr. Gerhardi's two dimensional area. He writes in a "European way," we say, chiefly because in Europe a seduction is not necessarily a tragedy. Mr. Gerhardi has nothing to do with tragedy. He sees life in its opera bouffe aspect and he wants us to share his ironical humor with him.

Apart from Wagnerian association, there are no heavy love trappings in "Tristan and Isolde." These moderns have aeolian harp hearts swept by the wayward dissonances and harmonies of sex. "He quibbled: 'Is that an affirmative or perhaps an equally determined negative?' She did not answer." Roundelays of torment these, capable of going on forever.

Even in "A Bad End," a situation incredibly fantastic, we feel no horror at Mr. Proudfoot's plight, for Mr. Gerhardi is so responsibly with us. "Mr. Proudfoot . . . [the gentleman is about to be hung] was still alive and struggling desperately with the executioner and three warders, who only knew that they had to despatch him; he should have been liquidated ten minutes ago." . . . With that sentence Mr. Proudfoot as "oneself except for the grace of God" somehow vanishes forever.

"The Big Drum" is an exception to the other stories. It belongs in a class by itself. The plot dealing with the emotions of a woman, who listens in a park to her lover—a drummer in an orchestra —moves by itself away from Mr. Gerhardi. Perhaps because neither he or anyone else can intrude to the source whence comes untainted that mysterious measuring of time. Back of clocks, of sundials, it belongs to man's earliest orientations. Bang, bang, bang—the drum gathers the spectators, the reader, the little sweetheart in its momentum, holding them together on the dot of the final BANG.

So did savage man exult before his woman, and make time stand still for her.

"My love, she thought." (Mr. Gerhardi is not anywhere about). "My king! My captain! . . ."

A Modern Centaur

HALF-GODS. By MURRAY SHEEHAN. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927. $2.50.

MURRAY SHEEHAN'S "Half-Gods" gives a depressing answer to the question, What Price Centaurs in Missouri? It is no slight trick of legerdemain to force on skeptical readers the acceptance of a centaur in perfectly realistic modern farm surroundings, and yet Mr. Sheehan accomplishes it. After the first shock of discovery that, instead of the reputable black mule expected, the Durnan mare has given birth to a creature "having the body of a horse and, superimposed upon that, the white torso of an indisputably human baby," the fantastic and the realistic run so smoothly together in double harness that there is no consciousness of incongruity. The centaur grows up with the Durnan children, accepted by them and by the neighborhood, so completely in fact that when Mr. Durnan proposes to turn an honest penny by exhibiting the young animal in a side-show the community finds novelty so lacking that this commercial sortie is a flat failure.

While young, the centaur plays with wood nymphs and strange folk of other times, and speaks in classic tongue. But environment is too strong for beauty, and he slowly sinks to the level of the grocery store loafers, his proudest moment when, his dreams repudiated and forgotten, he is accepted by them as one of themselves. In the story of the Durnan family running along with this, the struggle of the romantic and imaginative young Donald parallels somewhat, on the upward curve, the degeneration of the centaur. It is not difficult to find a symbolic moral, or several of them, but there is no forcing of the symbolic note. Despite some rather timid characterization, Mr. Sheehan's book is an interesting excursion into noonday dreamland.

How It All Began

THE GOLDEN COMPLEX: A Defense of Inferiority. By LEE WILSON DODD. New York: The John Day Company. 1927.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

MR. DODD is optimistic enough to hope that there remain seven thousand, more or less, in this populous and devout nation, who have not bowed the knee to Baal, whether that deity be locally worshiped under the form of Bruce Barton, H. L. Mencken, or John Broadus Watson. Confident that this tough-minded minority finds its splendid spiritual isolation a little lonesome, and far from nutritious, he brings it emergency rations which ought to be welcome to the most cantankerous eremite. For even Elijah the Tishbite needed a raven to feed him; how much more, those of us who have the infelicity to be on bad terms with both the Right Wing and the Left Wing, with Yahveh as well as Baal.

Accordingly Mr. Dodd appoints himself a raven. With some remarks of Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch as his text he points out the current dilemma of the intellectual, with or without the capital I (if you can conceive of an intellectual for whom the capital I is not the most important letter in the alphabet). "The Critical Intelligence no longer believes in God;" Man feels lost, and all his high purposes with him, in a universe which has no visible purpose at all. For unfortunately the human race is incurably teleological; it must have a Purpose before it can get up steam, it must see the Goal before it can start on the journey. And few of us are either so self-consciously pragmatical that we can be content with a goal which we recognize as only a mirage, or so energetic as to be able to endure even a few more marchings weary without some assurance that we shall be gathered home.

This is a fair statement of the present crisis, and a very serious crisis it is. The purposeless intellectual is one of the commonest and most depressing spectacles of our time, and something ought to be done about him in mere humanity, for his sake and that of the spectators as well. You might say, on regarding him casually, that what he needs is a swift kick, but that judgment would be hasty and unscientific. What he really needs is a Rock of Ages.

* * *

Mr. Dodd would not claim that this is an original discovery; the intellectuals have felt it, even if they do not admit it, for some time past, and have quarried in some rough and unpromising regions in search of a new Rock of Ages. We repeat the experience of the Romans, eighteen centuries ago; the old religion no longer convinces; pallid philosophy, the scientifically balanced ration of the dietitian, is flat and tasteless to the average palate; so the multitude turns to mystical salvation cults. (The urban multitude, that is; as in Rome, rural conservatism sticks to the forms, at least, of the old-time religion).

Most of the intellectuals, at the moment, appear to regard Mr. Mencken as their substitutionary paschal Lamb; though a pervicacious minority offers its bull on the altar of Dr. Watson. It is hard to follow Mr. Dodd in his conviction that Watsonism is the next predestined manifestation of the World Spirit; possibly he was unduly impressed by the great behavioristic taurobolium which took place at New Haven last year. At the moment Mencken seems to be outstripping Watson as Christianity outstripped Mithraism. But the Watsonites, wiser than the Mithraists, are intolerant of dissent—as intolerant as the Menckenites or the early Christians; and they have the advantage of an elaborate systematic theology, which Menckenism lacks as yet. So possibly Mr. Dodd is right in believing that the near future belongs to Behaviorism; but he fears that even under its beneficent sway a perfect race, grown from scientifically conditioned infants, will find itself bored to death by its own perfections and will be as badly off as the contemporary purposeless intellectuals.

Accordingly he offers a remedy, a stopgap gospel which he recommends chiefly on pragmatic grounds. Apparently he believes in it (though it is a little hard to be sure just what this quizzical author really does believe, especially when he says he believes it); but he argues that it will fill a long-felt want even as a working hypothesis. He seems, also, to suspect that the universe is not quite so purposeless as it looks, but he does not press the argument. Whether it is or is not, try old Dr. Dodd's remedy and see if it doesn't put the colors back in the landscape and the Purpose back in the soul.

That remedy is the Cosmic Vitamine, the ferment of discontent that brought life up from the slime and man down from the tree—the Inferiority Complex. Observe how this complex operated on "the original Amoeba, the primordial Globule" (and observe, at the same time, a sample of Mr. Dodd's style which will make this book a delight to the particular reader, though, one fears, caviar to the general):

> Consider with me for a moment that perhaps ultra-microscopic speck of protoplasm on the steaming, emergent, littoral of an else uninhabited world. . . . Are you not inclined to agree with me that its situation was desperate, its prospects not particularly bright? There it lay, faintly quivering—earth's first, oh! so dimly animate atom of potential self-consciousness! And what sense could it possibly have had save an utterly unconscious sense of Inferiority? . . . For how better, how else, can we describe the necessary accident—or accidental necessity—of the emergence of life than by assuming that one infinitesimal dot of primordial slime so ached (though unconsciously) with its cosmic unimportance that it got the fidgets and began slithering about?

* * *

And that's how it all began, my dears; from this slithering about sprang the great cosmic process which has eventuated, at last, in Sherwood Anderson, Carl Van Vechten, Earl Carroll. The Inferiority Complex explains it all; Life is the unconscious protest of matter, Consciousness the unconscious protest of Unconsciousness, Civilization the unconscious protest of Consciousness, against its own insignificance. And what we need now, he argues, is a conscious protest of Consciousness against its own insignificance. That will give our intellectuals a starting point, and perhaps they may ultimately find a goal.

All of which is illustrated by the history of certain men and certain races; the success of America, Mr. Dodd appears to feel, is only a reflex of the determination that Europe has gotta stop kickin' our dog around. How Lord Byron's history exemplifies this same great truth is already known to readers of *The Saturday Review*, in which that chapter was published; and it seems that St. Francis of Assisi is also a case in point. That holy man, in his early and unholy life, tried to be a gentleman but couldn't quite make the grade; whereupon he went in for sainthood to compensate his sense of inferiority.

So much for Mr. Dodd's contentions; what opinions actually lie behind them one hardly knows; for like the Deity he appears to include in his own substance all contradictions. He hands you an idea, and just as you reach out for it he whisks it away and offers its contrary; like the late Harry Greb, he attacks in a whirlwind of light taps from this side and that. So this book will be a joy to those who like verbal and intellectual agility, who have a taste for subtle and subterranean humor, who rejoice in polite irreverence; in short, to the civilized minority. But if you are an earnest person, if you are what Mr. Hearst once called a reverent religionist (especially a godless religionist), if you beat your forehead on the pavement before the image of Mencken or of Watson, keep your money in your pocket; Mr. Dodd is not for you.

For he has made the Supreme Sacrifice; he has offered himself as an argument to prove his contention *per oppositum*. All Success, he reasons, springs from the Inferiority Complex. Well, Mr. Dodd himself appears to be a victim of the Superiority Complex; he says, "Thus I believe, but I may be wrong." Whereupon the overwhelming majority of the Intellectual public (with a capital I, this time) will nod the head and say, "Yes, he may be wrong."

But if he had the proper sense of inferiority he would be tormented by easy doubts; and to silence them he would sound the shofar, beat the drum, and proclaim from the housetop, "I know it all." Whereupon the Intellectual public would echo: "He knows it all." Thus is a best seller made.

On occasion of the formal opening, April 22nd, of American participation in the rebuilding of the burned Shakespeare Memorial Theatre a cable was received from Bernard Shaw which read:

> I feel unspeakably humiliated at the spectacle of England trying to raise money on Shakespeare in America instead of building a worthy memorial to him at her own expense. But as our poor folk here have no money, and our rich would cheerfully sell their national heritage in Shakespeare for five cents,—if they could get it—I am forced to join my friend Archie Flower in his appeal to English-speaking America—what there is left of it—to save us from having to go to Germany.

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A Family Group

THE ALLINGHAMS. By MAY SINCLAIR. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY WELLINGTON

LONG ago, May Sinclair threw on the scrap-heap Victorian plots and Victorian heroines, letting her characters mould her novels and presenting women who are our contemporaries. More and more, she has become the detached and scrupulous artist; and whether it is an individual or a group (as in the present novel) which occupies her, the work is done in three dimensions, not two. Miss Sinclair says to us in effect: For flat surfaces, I do not care. Here are people, not as they appear, but as they really exist, insofar as I am able to perceive and transmit them. The result is a long succession of characters and events which have never before appeared in English fiction, presented with the art of a master, clear, compact, and solid, and from the tranquil depths of a philosophy which seeks not to startle but to reveal.

In "The Allinghams," it is not an individual but a group that has claimed May Sinclair's attention, a family group; and although the Allingham family is not so remarkable as the Harrisons, for instance, in "The Tree of Heaven," this apparently does not concern the artist. She has studied her rather ordinary middle-class English people with the same intentness, and equally they live through the medium of her art. May Sinclair is not so much concerned with the type as with the individual, yet this family of Allinghams is typical; for within its fold and underneath its surface conventionality, life expresses itself in wild and various ways.

* * *

Father and Mother are perfect Victorian survivals. Aunt Martha (the maiden aunt who lives in the family) cannot always be counted upon to uphold the Virtues, particularly where the children's happiness is at stake. The three sons and three daughters are brought up on their father's Berkshire estate, in a beautiful old Georgian house, strictly according to health and the conventions. Yet one son, Robin, drinks; and a daughter, Margaret, goes mad. The youngest child, Angela, gives herself recklessly to handsome Captain Cartaret on the eve of his departure for India with an unloved, unloving, and undivorceable wife. Thoughtful Stephen consecrates his life to the writing of unintelligible poetry. Only two of the Allingham children are content to live in comfortable propriety. And slowly, painfully, Father and Mother are brought to compromise with the younger generation. When Robin marries, "beneath him," a farmer's daughter who falters a little in her grammar but not in her determination to help him to sobriety, they are not shipped off to Canada as Father had planned, while Angela's illegitimate and charming Baby is finally accepted as a member of the family. That is a very beautiful scene, in the concluding chapter, where Father and Mother go up to the children's night nursery (long since deserted and lonely) to look at Baby confidently asleep in the cot, after months of angry exclusion, and we witness the gentle reconciliation of Victorian morals with life's unaccountable needs and urgencies.

"Books," says Storm Jameson, "are a good deal more to us than ways of escape. It would be a pity if they were not. They are the houses of our friends, our very faithful friends, who are never weary of our company, never fail to welcome us, and never betray us. Lucky the man who has one such friend among his fellows. In his books he may have a score. He may have them of any age and either sex. He may pick and choose among all arts and all trades. He may hobnob with the wise Ulysses or watch Penelope at her nightly task of unravelling the web of her daytime promises, and perhaps find out by what arts she kept herself attractive and desirable to her suitors during all the years of her husband's absence, and was found by him still young, still enchanting, when he returned. He may cheat Shylock of his dues and discover the quality of Christian mercy. . . . Let no man call himself lonely or unfriended, when he has books about him."

The Bowling Green

A Note on George Gissing

IF one wanted something to brood about, he might ask himself just why it is that George Gissing's books cast such a peculiar spell over their devotees. Upon me, at any rate, that spell is just as efficacious in his less successful works as it is in the radiant and universally admitted charm of *Ryecroft.* The recent—somewhat tentative—revival of interest in Gissing (really begun, as most revivals were, by the late Mr. Mosher, seven years ago) afflicted hardened Gissingers with a queer dilation of amazement. For the Gissing toxin is of that specially subtle kind that each inoculate wonders in his private skull what anyone else could find relishable in books so mournful, prosy, and ironic. If anything on earth is unfashionable just now it is the particular kind of technique that Gissing employed in fiction. Yet, if I have to testify, I must admit that at no time in the last ten years have I ever visited a second-hand bookshop without keeping an eye open for his books.

And when, the other day, I found *The Odd Women* (first edition, three volumes, 1893) at Alfred Goldsmith's on Lexington Avenue, I was particularly pleased. This was one of Gissing's I had never read, and I had always heard of it as one of his most depressing. It is a humiliating confession, I suppose: beginning the book in a low mood I found myself progressively more cheerful. There is something so complete in the griefs which Gissing unloads upon the six sisters of his tale that I admit I ended in excellent spirits.

* * *

This sounds so heartless that I must justify myself by some synopsis of the story. It begins by Dr. Madden remarking to his eldest daughter that "Tomorrow I shall take steps to insure my life for a thousand pounds." Dr. Madden, a country physician in his fiftieth year, has everything to live for. But the experienced student of fiction knows, from that very first sentence, that nothing can save him. He is doomed. He should have taken out that insurance long ago. The happy little carefree tea-party in the opening chapter, when the doctor reads The Lotos Eaters aloud to his girls, cannot fool us for a moment. Sure enough, that very evening he is thrown out of his dog-cart, and by page 16 he is dead. The mother of the six girls had already been "resting in the old churchyard" for two years. So now we follow the fortunes of the daughters.

Between pages 16 and 17, fifteen years pass by, so that already, in the second chapter, the Madden girls know that they're in for it. Alice, the oldest has a job as a governess at £16 a year. She has "brown hair, but very little of it." Worse still (she is now thirty-five) she "tended to corpulence; she had round shoulders and very short legs." Her complexion was "spoilt," her cheeks were loose and puffy, her forehead generally had a few pimples. She walked with a quick ungainly movement as if seeking to escape from someone.

* * *

Virginia (33) is a "lady's companion" at £12 a year. She also looks unhealthy, her lips are "lax," and wrinkles are "extending their network." She had undermined her constitution by excessive study of ecclesiastical history. Her out-of-doors dress was now in its third summer, poor soul. But her creator does have the heart to relent a little: "She could not have been judged anything but a lady. She wore her garments as only a lady can (the position and movement of the arms has much to do with this), and had the step never to be acquired by a person of vulgar instincts." But alas, even while she is on her way to buy a copy of Keble's *Christian Year*, as a birthday present for the youngest sister. we learn the worst. She goes into the refreshment bar of Charing Cross Station and has a furtive slug of brandy. You will not be surprised to hear that in volume three poor Virginia goes to a Home for Inebriates.

The three next in line are Gertrude, Martha, and Isabel. They are soon disposed of. Even in the preliminary chapter, when they were aged 14, 12, and 10, they had "no charm but youthfulness." By page 29 Gertrude and Martha are both beyond the troubles of Victorian fiction: "the former of consumption, the other drowned by the over-turning of a pleasure boat." Isabel, the plainest of the lot, does not survive them long (only two pages). She taught in a Board School. "Isabel was soon worked into illness. Brain trouble came on, resulting in melancholia. A charitable institution ultimately received her, and there, at two-and-twenty, the poor hard-featured girl drowned herself in a bath."

The following sentence, I am ashamed to say, moved me to audible mirth. "Their numbers had thus been reduced by half."

* * *

I wonder if any really competent novelist ever wrote anything more perversely grotesque than those first thirty pages of *The Odd Women?* It so rouses the wanton nerves of merriment that it almost unfits you to pursue with requisite seriousness the really fine stuff that follows. For there is fine stuff. Monica, the pretty youngest sister, escapes from drudgery in a draper's shop only to marry the hopelessly inappropriate Widdowson, a gloomy and jealous misanthrope old enough to be her father. Monica has been just enough touched by the "emancipation of women" movement to struggle feebly for her right to exist as an individual, but is not strong enough to make a go of it. She falls in love with a humorous young wine-merchant, and the episode of her sorry little infatuation is gently managed; yet Gissing tends to be impatient with all women not of intellectual tastes and sometimes seems almost irritated with poor Monica for lending herself to the very coincidences he has contrived for her misery. In the end Monica dies in child-birth; Virginia, as we have said, goes to an Institution; one can suspect that the only reason why even one of the sisters was spared was because someone had to look after the baby—also, ironically, a girl, another Odd Woman for the future.

* * *

The real weight and heft of Gissing's novel lies in the love story of Rhoda Nunn and Barfoot. In the character of Rhoda, the young radical so suspicious of men and of marriage and who had within her, unguessed by herself, such rich potential of passionate surrender, Gissing found a theme congenial to his idealism. Rhoda is certainly the finest feminine portrait that I have found in Gissing's gallery; she would rank high in any collection of notable women. Her courage and self-command are set over against the weakling and pitiable lives of the Madden sisters; but her love for the cynic Barfoot is frustrated too. Gissing's irony is at any rate consistent. And, once we can push beyond the deplorably comic effect of his opening passages, we begin to perceive his strong pity. Nowadays, when —superficially at least—the footing of woman seems so much more secure, some of the speculations of his emancipated ladies seem truism; but there are those who are highly praised for courage when they say the same things today. With all his distrust of women, his clear eye saw the appalling difficulty of their situation. Rhoda utters a remarkable saying in the course of this story—

> If every novelist could be strangled and thrown into the sea, we should have some chance of reforming women. The girl's nature was corrupted with sentimentality, like that of every woman who is intelligent enough to read what is called the best fiction, but not intelligent enough to understand its vice.

You will suspect, before you finish the three volumes, that Gissing thought highly of Rhoda. He paid her the highest compliment in his repertoire—"She had not a beautiful face; yet even at the first meeting it did not repel him. Studying her features he saw how fine was their expression . . . the prominent forehead, with its little unevennesses that meant brains."

The phrase is equally true of Gissing's novels. They are full of unevennesses, but there are always brains. His passion for human happiness and decency was so strong that by some queer inward twist it drove him to bedevil his characters for the sake of his high-minded theories. By an equally queer twist in at least one of his readers, that habit of his makes him the ideal novelist for moments of depression.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Books of Special Interest

Hellenism and the War

THE LOVE OF MYRRHINE AND KONALLIS, AND OTHER POEMS IN PROSE. By RICHARD ALDINGTON. Chicago: Pascal Covici. 1926. $7.50.

Reviewed by EDWARD DAVISON

MR. ALDINGTON'S unmistakable gifts make it difficult to understand why he has never come to terms with the art of poetry. A few years ago he was producing "free-verse" which, with a minimum of typographical rearrangement, could be made to reveal the nakedest of iambic pentameters.

The ancient songs pass deathward mournfully,
Cold lips that sing no more and withered wreaths,
Regretful eyes and drooping breasts and wings,
Symbols of ancient songs, mournfully passing. . . .

Now he describes the fragments in his new volume as "prose poems" and one would be hard put to it to explain wherein they differ (save in typography) from free-verse. It is all very confusing unless one has learned to foster a disregard for the names of things while still maintaining an interest in their inherent nature.

"The Love of Myrrhine and Konallis" might have been sired by the Greek Anthology (Mackail's translation) out of Sappho, and weaned, as it were, by H.D. This is not to suggest that Mr. Aldington has been influenced by the English version rather than the Greek. His scholarship, like his rather humorless sincerity, cannot be doubted. But he has not outstripped the mere translator whose prose versions avowedly lack the grace and finish of their metrical originals. Not for the first time Mr. Aldington has produced a rather meagre book which can only be praised faintly for its negative qualities. Incidentally, we venture to suggest, it is also a book that is likely to find the majority of its limited public among the collectors of naughty literature. The author will be amply revenged for their mistake as to his intentions when such people discover how mild a taste of naughtiness they have bought for seven-and-a-half dollars. Let Mr. Aldington's erotica speak for itself.

I, Konallis, am but a goat girl dwelling on the violet hills of Korinthos. But going down to the city a marvelous thing befel me; for the beautiful fingered hetaira, Myrrhine, held me nightlong in her couch, teaching me to receive her strange burning caresses.

He gives us a score of poems on the same theme. The present reviewer is unsympathetic enough to recall somebody's phrase about ordure in aspic. But even when familiarity has withered these Sapphic blooms the investor will be able to console himself with the flattering type, the paper, and binding of the volume.

Mr. Aldington very quickly leaves the sea to sob round the Lesbian promontories by itself, and then he has some revealing things to say concerning the psychological effects of his war experiences. In one of these later fragments he refers with characteristic solemnity to his own position:

To have passed so close to annihilation and (which is worse) to have become stained unalterably with the ideas and habits of the masses—this leaves me immeasurably discouraged, out of love with myself. Now I am good only to mimic the inferior masters . . . for me silence, or if speech, then some humble poem in prose. Indeed I am too conscientious—or shall we say impotent—to dare the cool rhythm of prose, the sharp edges of poetry. Nymph de Parnasse! Encore un Pegase rate!

Here is self-deceit as well as self-compassion, both a kind of sentimentality. So far as Mr. Aldington truthfully reflects his mind in his work, he is much less "stained" (a suspiciously superior word) than most poets by the ideas and habits of the masses. Whence comes, for instance, his preoccupation for Lesbianism? From Bloomsbury, or Hampstead, or Golders Green? It might be better with Mr. Aldington's verse if he displayed his likelier stains more frequently. When he did so, in his last long poem, "A Fool i' the Forest," and when he does so again in a few pieces in the present volume, the verse (or, if you will, the prose) suddenly leaps into life. He gains more than he knows whenever he allows himself to be touched by the very habits and ideas that are here so pettishly lamented. Nothing in his pseudo—and neo-Hellenic imitations can compare with such a poem as "The Last Salute." As for mimicking inferior masters Mr. Aldington still mimics the same masters who occupied his interests before the war. And we suspect him of cant when he says that the "stain" he has suffered is worse than annihilation. In short, he strikes a false attitude which is hard to forgive in one whose intelligence deserves praise in so many other respects. The illustrations at the beginning and end of this book may lead the ignorant to suppose that Aubrey Beardsley still lives.

Literary Attitudes

ROMANTICISM. By LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE. New York: The Viking Press. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by FREDERICK E. PIERCE
Yale University

THERE are two related factors in every poem, like soul and body. One is the author's thought or mental attitude; the other is the literary machinery through which he expresses this. Changes in the latter do not necessarily run parallel to those in the former. Mental attitudes in a succession of great poets may change but little, while their machinery of expression goes through the wildest alterations, partly for the sake of sheer variety, partly because the ever-shifting multitude will neither buy nor applaud unless the great stable minds *seem* to shift in harmony with them. So a great deal that is discussed in the way of literary movements, from neo-classicism to romanticism, from romanticism to naturalism, etc., represents really the fashionable changes in the Muses' wardrobes, rather than changes in those interesting ladies themselves.

But there are real differences as well in the depths of great minds; and it is with these, not with the shifting phantasmagoria of public taste, that Mr. Abercrombie deals. His little book is both intelligent and readable. He finds all literary thought splitting into two general divisions, the romantic and the realistic. The romantic emphasizes the inner life of the soul; the realistic emphasizes the external world and the soul's reaction to that. Practically every poet has some romanticism and some realism; but in most one predominates over the other and makes the author's work in general romantic or realistic, however this general effect may seem to be contradicted by occasional passages. Where both elements mingle in ideal balance the poet is neither romantic nor realistic, but classic, for classicism is not an element in literature, but a harmonious fusion of all elements The author tacitly admits that under this division some of the greatest so-called "romantic" poets would become "classic;" and we are left to assume that under it some brilliant neo-classicists such as Pope, would become realists.

There is a great deal of truth in this attitude, truth that no reviewer's ink can wash away. But the author has not wholly escaped the fate of all critics who write on this vexed and confusing problem. Life is so vast and complicated that even the most skilful definitions will not wholly fit. He assumes that poets write in an esthetic vacuum, and forgets that they write in a stormy environment, which changes them in spite of their teeth. Does it follow because two writers become absorbed in their inner life, that they are naturally alike? In a great, inspiring age most great souls become eager to get in touch with the nobility around them, and we have humanistic poets who are men of affairs, as in the age of Æschylus. In an evil age souls equally great and strong draw away from the evil around them and turn in on themselves, not because they are different, but because their age is different. Such was the case with the Church Fathers and Neo-Platonic thinkers in decadent Rome. Today in America is the romanticist who escapes from Gopher Prairie into fairyland so different from the realist who photographs Gopher Prairie to damn it? Both hate the same town and the same life; both have a vision of something far more beautiful, making the town blacker by contrast. At bottom, the difference is often not so much in the quantity or quality of their poetic feeling as in the quantity and quality of their pugnacity. One runs away from the enemy, the other hits said enemy between the eyes; but both are on the same side in the battle.

Mr. Abercrombie has written an excellent book, but we do not feel that the problem is wholly solved even yet.

Critic vs. Critic

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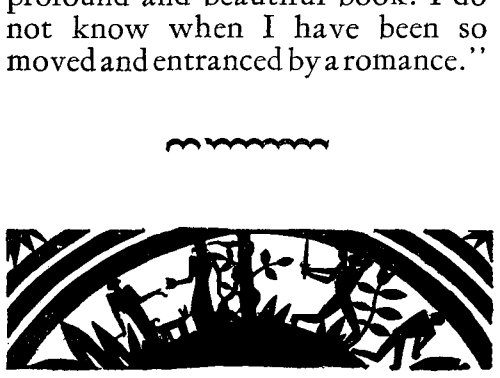

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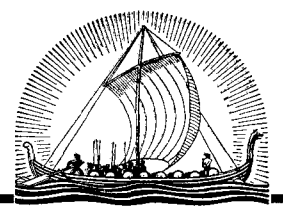

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THE PUBLISHER'S Young Man, favored by the cast of fate, has but recently returned from England,—a most admirable vantage point from which to observe the burgeoning of daffodils and the sudden greening of English oaks. Himself a light-hearted bibliophile, he found London rare book prices even higher than those of New York, for the London dealers prepare for the undiscriminating demand of the summer tourist horde. Be thrifty, ye tourists, and buy your books in New York!

Not all the P. Y. M.'s time was spent in arduous labor. You who know your London but know not the fish luncheon of Simpson's-in-Cheapside have missed the most interesting and ancient of English gastronomic ceremonies. Nor are the Dover sole of the Garrick Club to be devoured without deserved solemnity! There one sees Michael Sadleir, whose excellent biography of Trollope reminds us that ten attractive volumes of Trollope are in the *World's Classics*.(8) Then too, there were pleasant meetings with old friends at Oxford, including Cyril Bailey, the editor of the *Mind of Rome*(9) and the *Legacy of Rome*.(10) The latest, and perhaps the most brilliant, book in this series is *The Legacy of Israel*,(11) soon to appear. Scholars and wise readers will take notice.

BUT THE flow of scholars is no longer only from America to England. British Universities return the implied compliment in increasing numbers, and their envoys are welcome visitors to The Amen Corner in New York. Dr. H. B. Workman of Westminster College, the author of an unequalled study of *John Wyclif*,(12) was a recent caller. So was Professor de Sélincourt, of Birmingham University, whose study of *Wordsworth's Prelude*(13) has received high and merited praise. Professor W. S. Holdsworth, of whom one may say indeed that his word is law, deserts Oxford for a few months in America, on the eve of the publication of his new book.

And soon we hope to welcome Mr. Stanley Unwin, a dean of London publishers, and himself the author of a fine manual of his profession.

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The Book Belt of the Pacific Coast

By FREDERIC MELCHER
Editor, *Publishers' Weekly*

THERE is a suddenly awakened interest today in books, not in the contents simply, but in the books themselves, in their printing and illustration, also in their publishing and distribution. It is as if the fine old words "publisher" and "bookseller" had suddenly been found to contain hidden values which the uninitiate would find pleasure in unearthing. Even the popular magazines have been carrying articles on publishing, and business periodicals, discussions on book promotion.

People have become genuinely interested in the problems that confront authorship and publishing and the processes that select, produce, evaluate, and broadcast the books that they read. Some too, as is natural, are worrying, not about their own supply of reading matter, but about an undefined hinterland which, it is suspected, no books are likely to reach unless the machinery of book distribution be overhauled.

A trade paper such as the *Publishers' Weekly* finds that it is adding to its readers among the publishers, booksellers, and librarians a fringe of subscribers who want to read more about how the wheels of the book-trade go round, and every morning's mail brings to the office inquiries from some part of the country for book-trade data of some kind. Some inquirers study such data and find satisfactory evidence of bookselling gains, others see in the same figures a desperate condition. The optimist is comparing our consumption of books with the totals of a decade ago; the discouraged observer is comparing our book-or-two per capita with the not too impossible library in every home of the future. The optimist is impressed by the new enthusiasm and competence that he has found in many bookstores; the discouraged one calls to mind the many times when he has found inadequate stock and service.

The active American book-belt starts along the North Atlantic Coast, passes south of the Lakes, spreads and thins out on the plains, and, then undaunted by the mountains, makes a vigorous showing in the Coast states. As my own bookselling experience had been restricted to New England and the Middle West and my observations, to territory east of the Rockies, it seemed urgent for me to get a first hand impression of the famous book country lying between Spokane and San Diego and of its machinery for book distribution.

That there are practical difficulties for the merchant who must handle merchandise produced three thousand miles away is obvious, and, when that merchandise consists of books, there is a news element which enters into the problem along with the problems of cost of transportation. It would be well, I believe, if the book buying public of the Coast were aware of the problems which face their booksellers. They would be the more appreciative of the really good service they receive. The problem is great, and seems to me to have been faced with vigor and competence, vigor that is receiving its rewards in good bookstore support because of the high state of book interest in the whole region.

It is said that the excellence of the bookshops of the Coast is a natural result of the populating of these states by the best stock of the east, people already book-minded. This is probably true, and the country thus peopled soon, from its richness of resources, supplied a competence which has given a margin for leisure and for the niceties of life.

I have often wished that some student of the cultural developments of America would give some adequate study to the influence of the bookstore on the community. The bookstore today works side by side with the school and library, but, in the first stages of our national expansion into western areas, the schools were inadequate and could teach only the mechanics of reading, and the libraries were perfecting, in the cities of the east, that technique which is now so universally put to use, but the education of grown men and women had to develop on the material provided by the pioneer merchants who started the bookstores.

Examples of the building power of bookstores are not hard to find in the chronicles of the Coast. Gill's of Portland was the creation of one man, now living, whose career of bookselling has spanned the whole period since the Civil War. During this time his store has used all the resources of good merchandising to bring into the Pacific Northwest a representative supply of books and to find the readers for them in the highways and byways of three states. Gill's Portland bookstore, like the Portland *Oregonian*, has made its mark on the history of the section, and, today, with its extended contacts with the schools, libraries, and colleges of the area, is continuing its stimulating influence. Among all the bookstores which have exerted a cultural influence on a large community during the long period of its development, I know of no other which has so clear a claim to civic gratitude.

One of the early book shipments from the Gill store was to a young man from Philadelphia who had decided to make a bookselling venture in Spokane. He founded a bookstore which is a dominating influence in the Inland Empire, a business which, like Gill's, is housed in the most modern of buildings owned and planned by its proprietor, a business which extends its service to the schools and libraries of three states. Lowman & Handford's of Seattle, whose trading area reaches to Nome, is another outstanding example of a bookstore which has greatly influenced a widespread community.

An influence quite different in method but not in value is that of the long established stores of A. M. Robertson in San Francisco and Charles C. Parker in Los Angeles. Mr. Robertson kept flying a guidon for good booksellers in his beloved city through bad years and good. He could do this because of a personality so confident and so stimulating that it kept at his side a loyal group of customers. It has been Mr. Robertson's fighting spirit that has made possible for San Francisco in these easier years of bookselling its attractive group of shops which give to Post Street its bookish flavor.

The University Club of Los Angeles made an exception to the collegiate requirement for membership, thus doing credit to its judgment, when it added to its roster some years ago the name of Charles Cullom Parker, bookseller. His store has been a university in itself and he the administrator and chief of faculty. The graduates, if they ever can be said to end their course of study, are scattered all over California. Here is an indefatigable bookman who has read everything from Homer to Hergesheimer, knows editions and editors, has the right books in stock, fits them to right readers, and has been doing this for forty years.

It may seem invidious to single out for special emphasis these few bookmen from many, but their records make it possible to illustrate the fact that the present book-trade activity on the Coast has a background of highly effective book service which goes back half a century. These bookmen are still living, and one might add from smaller cities the names of W. W. Osborne of Santa Barbara or John Hewett of Long Beach.

The difficulties of the Pacific Coast bookseller, to which I referred, are, then, not the difficulties of finding a public for books but the difficulties of time and expense which are involved in doing business at a long distance from the source of supplies. The rate of sale of standard stock can never be exactly predicted, and the demand for new books is, of course, hopelessly unpredictable. How can the bookseller keep the right supply of books, old and new, on his shelves, and how can he renew those supplies promptly yet economically? That is a problem to test the ability of a merchant and the sixth sense of a bookman.

The advertising of new books to the consumers reaches the readers of the west almost simultaneously with the east; the same news stories, current events, book reviews which stir up book demands in New York whet the appetites on the Coast; *The Saturday Review*, the *Times Supplement*, and *Books* are seen everywhere, to say nothing of excellent local book pages and broadcasting.

The new books which each week brings have usually been shown to the dealers of the Coast two or three months before publication. If it should happen that the new titles are ready well ahead of that date, they can be ordered shipped by water freight via the Canal along with the less urgent of the stock orders. The cost will be but three to five cents per book. If there is little time available, as is usually the case, or, if the replacements are needed at once, overland freight, which will cut delivery time in half and double the cost, can bring the boxes through in from two to three weeks. If it comes to a question of meeting a rapid run on a new title or of filling an urgent special order, the bookseller must use pre-

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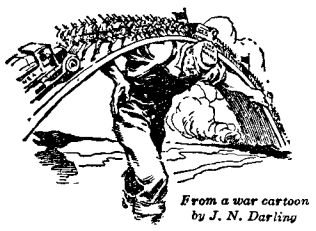

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The growing importance of this great outlet for books is causing the whole problem of Coast distribution to receive close attention from publishers. The center of book production is not going to shift for many practical reasons; it is the method of distribution that must be fitted to growing opportunities and increasing needs. Many publishers have made recent observation trips to study the situation; the most competent salesmen obtainable have been assigned to cover this territory; shipping departments in the home warehouses have been coached to watch the details of prompt and economical shipments west, and, in the case of two houses, the complicated problem of depository offices has been faced with headquarters at San Francisco and service from there for the whole Coast, a system already found necessary for the textbook business.

It is as true on the Coast as anywhere that a book well displayed is half sold, and no amount of mail-order service from a distance can take the place of a chain of varied bookshops extending the opportunity of book examination.

How alluring such shops can be in equipment and display method, I found again and again exemplified on the Coast. Seldom have I seen department stores take more pains with their equipment for bookselling than The Emporium of San Francisco, J. W. Robinson's or Bullock's at Los Angeles, or Frederick & Nelson's in Seattle; seldom have I seen a better college town bookstore than Sommer's Sather Gate Shop at Berkeley, or better small city shops than Vroman's at Pasadena, or Levinson's at Sacramento. The large general store of Fowler Brothers of Los Angeles, like those of the northwest already mentioned, is a model of good planning, and there is nothing in the country more colorful than the group which includes Paul Elders's, Gelber's, and the Post Street Bookshop in San Francisco or the Telecote in Santa Barbara, or more likeable than the rare bookshops of Howell's and Newbegin's in San Francisco or Dawson's in Los Angeles.

It is when one sees the activity of these stores and observes the stimulus of the great educational and library systems of the section that the publisher (and author) begins to understand that the Coast as a book market has only begun its growth, and it is after one has traveled for four days out or back that an eastern bookman begins to ponder on the vital importance of a well-balanced book distributing machinery that will bring with the greatest possible ease and economy books, both standard and current, to that great western market.

The next play in the Variorum Shakespeare, edited by Dr. Horace Howard Furness, Jr., will be "Coriolanus," and it will probably be ready for publication in the late summer or early autumn. During the five years occupied in the preparation of this volume, Dr. Furness has read 1,200 texts of the play, 350 of them in German.

Pascal Covici of Chicago has brought out Henry Justin Smith's "Innocents Aloft," a book William McFee liked so well that he has written an introduction for it. It is a collection of Alpine pen-pictures and Parisian souvenirs. Mr. Smith is but recently back from abroad. He is the author of a newspaper epic, "Deadlines."

A collection of over one hundred oil paintings of the nineteenth century, sold on the evening of May fifth, was the last group of paintings to be sold at the American Art Association this season. It was composed of pictures from the estate of the late Mrs. Nelson Robinson and the collection of Mr. Harry Toplitt, with additions. Representative examples of the English, Dutch, French, and American schools included a canvas by James Gale Tyler, "Whaler Weathering Cape Horn;" by Adolph Schreyer, "Peasants on a Journey;" by Alphonse de Neuville, "Infantry Quarters;" a portrait by John Hoppner; a fine portrait by Renoir; a winter scene by Thaulow; a portrait of John Getz, Esquire, by William Merritt Chase; one by Sully, and a midsummer study by Henry P. Smith. Other well known canvasses were by artists such as Jacque, Tryon, Madrazo, Cotes, Fortuny, Flamand, Watteau, and many others.

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Foreign Literature

Boswell in Swedish

JAMES BOSWELL. SAMUEL JOHNSONS Liv. Till Svenska, med Bibliografi, *Inledning, Anmärkningar,* och *Register,* av HARALD HEYMAN, fil. D: R. I FEM DELAR, med talrika Illustrationer. Första Delen: 1709-1753. Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag. 1926.

Reviewed by FREDERICK A. POTTLE

. . . me peritus denum
Discet Iber, Rhodanique potor.

ONE wonders whether Boswell would be more pleased or vexed to learn that his "Life of Johnson" is now, one hundred and thirty-five years after its publication, appearing in its first complete translation into any foreign tongue. Neither he nor the Doctor hesitated to avow a peculiar delight in international fame. Indeed, Johnson on few occasions showed himself so softened as when he exulted in the false report that "The Rambler" was about to appear in Russian. "O! Gentlemen, I must tell you a very great thing. The Empress of Russia has ordered 'The Rambler' to be translated into the Russian language: so I shall be read on the banks of the Wolga! . . ." Boswell: "You must certainly be pleased with this, Sir." Johnson: "I am pleased, Sir, to be sure." And as for Boswell, he must have looked for the speedy dissemination of his masterpiece to the banks of the Wolga and beyond. He swelled with pride over the Irish piracies of his "Account of Corsica," and complacently recorded the fact that that work had been translated into German, Dutch, and twice into French. He thought well, of course, of "An Account of Corsica," but he was well aware that the "Life" was much greater. "Yes," he says, "I have *Johnsonised the land.*" How has it happened that he has so signally failed to Johnsonise Europe? Dr. Hill thought it was simply because Johnson was "so English that foreigners could neither understand him nor relish his 'Life'," which may be an adequate explanation, though it seems somewhat too simple. The fact remains that, of all undisputed English masterpieces of the first rank, Boswell's "Life of Johnson" is perhaps the least known abroad.

Yet Boswell has always had a secure European reputation; not, to be sure, as the great biographer, but as a minor historian whose work on Corsica still possesses independent value. "An Account of Corsica," published in February, 1768, was at once made accessible in German, Dutch, French, and Italian. Anton Klausing, professor at Leipzig, made a German translation which ran through four editions. Hieronymus Mertens, a pedagogue of Augsburg, followed with a German abridgment. Seigneux de Correvon, councillor of Lausanne, with the help of a mysterious "Madame * * *" turned the "Account" into French, his work appearing simultaneously with another French translation by J. P. I. Dubois, secretary to the Polish ambassador at the Hague. The Italian and Dutch translators have not as yet been identified.

Boswell's first great Johnsonian work, the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," was well translated into German in 1787 by Albrecht Wittemberg, a *littérateur* of Hamburg. The translation seems to have been utterly neglected; at any rate, it has never been reprinted. Ten years later a German bluestocking named Dorothea Margarethe Liebeskind, after considerable success in translating English Gothic romances, made the second attempt to Johnsonize Germany, by bringing out the first volume of an abridgment of the "Life," the whole to be complete in three volumes. Germany showed no enthusiasm for the Doctor, and the work was never completed. The only other attempt to present the "Life" to foreign readers was made in 1851, when Aleksandr Druzhinin, Russian critic and fanatic admirer of the literature of Tory England, brought out in Russian a work entitled "Johnson and Boswell," in which he paraphrased considerable portions of the "Life" and the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides."

Boswell, we are pleased to remember, was interested in Sweden. "A History of Sweden" stands third in that extraordinary list of thirty works which he projected but never executed. In 1772 he asked Dr. Johnson whether he might venture to "write a history of Sweden, without going thither." Johnson thought he might, at least "one for ordinary use." The next year when he and the Doctor were in the Isle of Skye they actually elaborated a plan of "going up the Baltick and visiting some of the more northern regions"—perhaps to get materials for the history. How barely we may have missed having "The Journal of a Tour up the Baltick with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.!"

Dr. Heyman's work shows clearly that he has felt the responsibility of his position. His Boswell is not a cheap and careless abridgment, but a monumental work of painstaking scholarship, with which only one English edition—Hill's—deserves comparison. This first volume (360 pages plus nearly 200 of introduction) brings the "Life" down only to 1753. There will be four more volumes; five, if the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides" is included. But the work is by no means intended for the scholar alone. Dr. Heyman has tried to make it attractive to the ordinary Swedish reader as well, and has succeeded better than one would have supposed possible. His translation combines the essential principles of two editions so widely different as Hill's, the definitive scholarly edition, and Ingpen's, the most lavishly illustrated. The text is Hill's, and the notes in general have been selected from his, though the peculiar needs of the Swedish reader have naturally been kept foremost in mind. The text, however, is broken into chapters as in Ingpen's edition, and all Ingpen's illustrations are reproduced. Boswell's own notes and a few from Malone's editions are left as footnotes; the editors are collected at the ends of the chapters. It is a remarkable testimonial to the taste and intelligence of the Swedish nation and the character of its publishers that such an elaborate and expensive work can be launched as an ordinary commercial enterprise.

Dr. Heyman has prefaced this volume with nearly two hundred pages of introductory matter. A bibliographical section presents a fuller list of works in Johnsonian scholarship than any single work in English. A preface discusses the problem of presenting Johnson to a non-English-speaking public, and a long essay, "Samuel Johnson och James Boswell" attempts to evaluate Boswell's book and its hero for a Swedish reader. There is a separate index of thirty-seven pages, modeled on Hill's, and comparable with it for fulness.

Confession

BEKENNTNISSE DES HOCHSTAPLERS FELIX KRULL: Buch der Kindheit. VON THOMAS MANN. Leipzig: Deutsche Verlags Anstalt. 1927.

Reviewed by PIERRE LOVING

WITH "The Magic Mountain" Thomas Mann, it is conceivable, may have reached the summit of his method: this beautifully flowing and rounded book represents perhaps the *ne plus ultra* of his gifts and his ripe knowledge and whither he will go from now on, it is difficult to foretell. This classically resourceful writer who uses the German language with a full sense of its deep inherited values, playing with rare virtuosity on all its stops, was indeed pre-*destined—if nothing untoward intervened* to cut short his ascent—to achieve his clear goal. For at the outset, it is evident, he set his eyes on attaining certain ends, and these ends were for the most part conscious and quite realizable. And he now may claim the happy distinction of having done all that he could do with his medium and with the "correspondences"—to use a favorite expression of Baudelaire's—of that medium within his own interior world. This, it may be, is the enviable fate of the writer who is born fully aware of both his talent and his limitations. And he is bound, if persists long enough, to find himself and so to skirt all disrupting surprises.

This, moreover, is apt to be the fate of the writer who starts out, as Mann did, with a smooth finished style. We know that Mann spent incisive years perfecting that almost faultless style: he tells us as much, vicariously, through a number of his characters who are either scholars or writers or both. But—without attempting paradox—the flaw in the perfect writer's prose may be exactly this *summum bonum* of perfection. "Style" is something fixed and limited in which, it goes without saying, only the fixed, constrained and limited things can best be uttered.

In the work of Thomas Mann, accordingly, "style" is a very definite thing: it is, in a word, the inherited resources and *music of German prose.* There are few, very few vagaries in this fluent prose, few adventures and rencounters beyond pure felicity. I sometimes think that Melville and Hardy, Keats and Blake, Hölderlin and Rimbaud, were blessed beyond words by the high anthropomorphics precisely in that they were not vouchsafed this solemn perfection.

In these confessions of a speculator in European high finance (Mann has only gotten as far as the young man's seventeenth or eighteenth year) we easily note the flagrant imperfections in this exquisite style of Thomas Mann's. At the outset we are asked, for example, to accept these personal confessions of a middle-class youth with no literary discipline and education (save the meagre alibi that his father had once lived in Paris and he may have inherited Latin form that way) as the authentic expression, the very living voice and accent, of a crude speculator. The accent, however, is not at all credible; the exquisite prose style of Thomas Mann stands solidly with its long flowing robes between the reader and the character who is speaking.

By the careful and exact choice of words, the middle-class German who is here making his *confiteor* attests to a remarkable sensitivity which his actions and the tenor of his thoughts subsequently belie. Is it possible, we may well ask, for a man thus unschooled to clothe his thoughts—apart from the liquid music of which I have already spoken—in language which only an inheritor of the long usufruct of European prose like Thomas Mann could reasonably employ? If a writer possesses a superb style, rather than a superb instrument, his subjects, as we see, are apt to be considerably restricted, and the reader, no matter how indulgent, will find it enormously hard to swallow the convention.

I find it hard to explain why Mann fails in Felix Krull's first love affair with the servant Genoveva. As I have said, the language is choice and flowing, the rhythm is highly pleasing. But we are asked once more to admit the convention that a man who commands such harmonies of language, capable of such infinite variety and subtlety, could dismiss his introduction to fleshly love as a thing of no moment. Felix Krull contents himself with saying (but is it not the author speaking here?) that others have described this sort of thing and, as for him, he has no appetite for dwelling on this "materia." Well, well — the mellifluous and absurd adulteries of Mr. Hergesheimer must wring their hands in the outer void at such brutal indifference.

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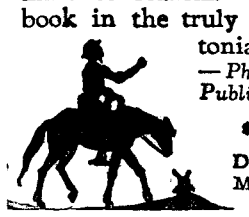

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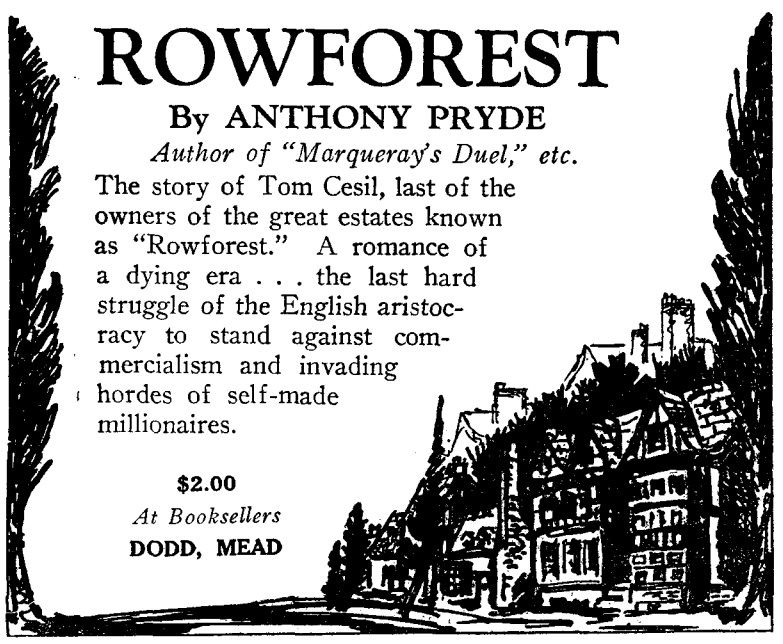

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

DANTE. By *John Jay Chapman.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

THE THEATRE IN LIFE. By *Nicolas Evreinoff.* Brentano's. $3.50.

LISZT, WAGNER, AND THE PRINCESS. By *William Wallace.* Dutton. $5.

THE TOMB OF TUT-ANKH-AMEN. By *Howard Carter.* Vol. 2. Doran. $5.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN'S PIANOFORTE SONATAS. By *William Behrend.* Dutton. $2.50.

NEW ESSAYS AND AMERICAN IMPRESSIONS. By *Alfred Noyes.* Holt. $2.50.

LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY. Cicero, Translated by J. E. King; Hippocrates, Translated by E. T. Wittington, Volume III; Polybius, Translated by W. R. Paton, Vols. V and VI. Edited by *E. Capps, T. H. Page* and *W. H. D. Rouse.* Putnams.

SHAKESPEARE STUDIES. By *Elmer Edgar Stoll.* Macmillan. $4.

1001 AFTERNOONS IN CHICAGO. By *Ben Hecht.* $2.50.

A HISTORY OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE. By *Prince D. S. Mirsky.* Knopf. $4.

SECRETS OF THE WHITE HOUSE. By ELIZABETH JAFFRAY. Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. 1926. $2.50.

WHITE HOUSE GOSSIP. By EDNA M. COLMAN. Doubleday, Page. 1927. $5.

"Gossip" better fits the first of these books than the one which has the name in its title. This is no reflection upon the accuracy of the statements and stories set forth by Mrs. Jaffray, who was Presidential housekeeper for seventeen years, from Taft's inauguration through the Wilson and Harding administrations and a year of the term now being served by Coolidge. Miss Colman's volume follows her "Seventy-five Years of White House Gossip" and covers the period from Johnson to the present. It is dignified and political rather than informal and personal, although it has many personal touches. Two quotations relating to President Coolidge will show the difference in tone between these books. Referring to the President's dry humor Miss Colman writes: "At one of the informal gatherings, a woman, desiring to impress herself upon his mind, remarked airily, 'Mr. President, I'm from Boston!' With that twinkle that is so ready to show itself, he remarked instantly, 'You'll never get over it!'" Mrs. Jaffray was struck with another Coolidge trait: "The White House is run in the most economical way possible and the actual White House expenses of President Coolidge during the past four years have averaged less than $1,000 a month. I think it is quite safe to say that President Coolidge has been able to save $50,000 a year during all the time he has been in the White House."

Dress, menus, personal characteristics including foibles—these are the things that interest Mrs. Jaffray and no doubt will delight—or shock—her readers. Among the "secrets" she reveals are President Wilson's indifference to food and clothes, President Harding's insistence upon having toothpicks on the dining room table, President Coolidge's pair of indulgences—an afternoon nap and cigars—and the exact amount of wines and liquors served at a certain state dinner. Dealing with a much longer period than that surveyed by Mrs. Jaffray, Miss Colman presents personages and customs of a vanished era as well as some of those of our own time. Her attention to dates and important events gives her chapters a historical character, while her use of more personal material imparts color and life to her pages.

ROOSEVELT AS WE KNEW HIM. By FREDERICK S. WOOD. Winston. 1927. $3.50.

In this volume are assembled the recollections of one hundred and fifty of the late Theodore Roosevelt's friends, many of them his associates at one stage or another of his career. They are partly appreciative, partly analytical, partly anecdotal. The interest of such a book needs no stressing. The material is arranged chronologically with reference to Roosevelt's life. Among the contributors are Major George Haven Putnam, Charles W. Eliot, William Howard Taft, Brander Matthews, Alton B. Parker, Admiral Sims, Oscar S. Straus, General Pershing, and a number of newspaper men. The stories show the Colonel in characteristic fashion, recalling his vivacity, his range of interests, his insistence upon efficiency, his love of the human aspect of things, his humor. If the laudation voiced by some of the contributors goes to extremes, they unconsciously supply a corrective in some of the stories they tell. The secretary of Roosevelt's class at Harvard is guilty of an exhibition of bad taste in the remark: "I am glad Roosevelt died while strong and vigorous, and that he did not have to 'survive himself,' as perhaps in some measure Woodrow Wilson did." On the whole, however, the volume is an excellent piece of work.

WASHINGTON. By *Joseph Dillaway Sawyer.* Macmillan. 2 vols. $20.

AMERICAN MASTERS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE. Edited by *Howard W. Odum* Holt. $4.50.

BARNUM'S OWN STORY. The Autobiography of P. T. Barnum. Viking Press. $3.

THE EVOLUTION OF CHARLES DARWIN. By *George A. Dorsey.* Doubleday, Page. $2.

FROM SERFDOM TO BOLSHEVISM. The Memoirs of Baron N. Wrangel. Lippincott. $4.

RIATA AND SPURS. By *Charles A. Siringo.* Houghton Mifflin. $3.

POLONAISE. The Life of Chopin. By *Guy De Pourtalès.* Holt.

LORD BIRKENHEAD. By *Ephesian.* Doran. $4.

MARCEL PROUST, HIS LIFE AND WORK. By *Léon Pierre Quint.* Knopf. $3.50.

Drama

THE SECOND MAN. By S. N. BEHRMAN. Doubleday, Page. 1927.

This comedy in three acts opened at the Guild Theatre on April 11th last, Lynn Fontanne, Alfred Lunt, and Margalo Gillmore taking the principal parts. The production was directed by Philip Moeller. The play is crisply modern with a number of amusing lines. It centres about a rather blasé writer who evidently possesses considerable personal charm, inasmuch as a Mrs. Kendall Frayne (looking somewhat like Sargent's "Madame X") and a delightful flapper, Monica Grey, are both in love with him. The character drawing throughout is convincing. The main idea of the play, which gives it its title, is drawn from a quotation from a letter of Lord Leighton's where he said,

> . . . For, together with, and as it were behind, so much pleasurable emotion, there is always that other strange second man in me, calm, critical, observant, unmoved, blasé, odious.

Certainly there is, by his own admission, such an individual in the character of Clark Storey, who may be called the hero—or villain—of the piece, as you will. Yet doubts arise, considerable doubts, as to this being the most important feature of the play. To this reviewer (who has not seen the actual performance on the stage) the merit of the production would seem to consist in the suavely amusing comedy of manners it presents. Nowhere is the dialogue brilliant, but it is a little more than competent, and the portrait of the undisciplined and endearing Monica Grey is particularly diverting. The scene between Storey and Lowe, when the latter is about to take his (Storey's) life is excellently imagined. A creditable comedy altogether, a neat transcript from what might well be actual life.

MODERN ENGLISH PLAYWRIGHTS. By *John W. Cunliffe.* Harper. $3.

MARCO MILLIONS. By *Eugene O'Neill.* Boni & Liveright. $2.50.

MORE ONE-ACT PLAYS. Edited by *Helen Louise Cohen.* Harcourt, Brace. $2.25.

Economics

THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS. By *Nikolai Bukharim.* International Publishers. $2.50.

Education

THE ROMANCE OF WORDS. By *Ernest Weekley.* Dutton. $2.

THE SMALL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL. By *Francis T. Spaulding.* Harvard University Press. $2.50.

HISTORY OF SOCIALIST THOUGHT. By *Harry W. Laidler.* Crowell. $3.50.

THE CALCULUS OF VARIANTS. By *W. W. Greg.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

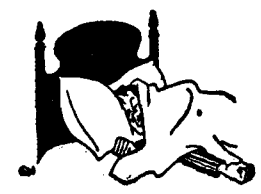
CLASSICAL MYTHS THAT LIVE TODAY. By *Frances E. Sabin.* Silver, Burdett. $1.92.

BREAD LOAF TALKS ON TEACHING COMPOSITION. By *Alfred M. Hitchcock.* Holt.

STUDY PLANS FOR NOVELS READ IN HIGH SCHOOLS. By *Alfred M. Hitchcock.* Holt.

UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE. Edited by *Edward A. Pace, Thomas J. Shahan, Conde B. Pallen, James J. Walsh, John J. Wynne* and numerous collaborators. Twelve Volumes. Volume II. New York: Universal Knowledge Foundation, Inc.

(*Continued on next page*)



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The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Fiction

THE MAGIC CASKET. By R. AUSTIN FREEMAN. Dodd, Mead. 1927. $2.

To those who are devotees of mystery stories, Mr. Freeman's Thorndyke is a detective of considerable achievement. He and Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot are notable additions to the growing group of sleuths in fiction. Mr. Freeman's present volume, as usual featuring Thorndyke, is a collection of short stories covering various "cases" taken in charge by this detective whose author now exercises much more ingenuity and plausibility than does the creator of Sherlock Holmes. From blood-clots, from the natural history of ditch and pond, even from the hairs of an elephant's tail, Thorndyke constructs his analyses of cleverly hidden crime. As pathologist, naturalist, and acute observer, also, of such minutiæ as an apparently dead man's ashes in a crematorium, he displays his observant skill. All the stories are well worked out, both as to motive for the crimes and as to probabilities, with the solution always deft and dramatic. The element of terror is present only in inference, the interest in the stories centering about the ingenuity with which the crime was planned and by means of which it is unravelled. Mr. Freeman remains one of the most ingenious writers of our time in this field of fiction.

BREAK O'DAY. By CON O'LEARY. Doran. 1927. $2.

Rural Ireland, toward the end of the late Terror, is the scene of this picturesque, deeply penetrating, yet ironic study of a Celtic rascal. He is an ex-member of the Constabulary, a poltroon, a braggart, a renegade, self-styled *The Cabogue*, who goes about the countryside posing as a rebel "on the run," thereby gain the hospitality and confidences of patriots only, when opportunity offers, to betray them to their oppressors. Occasionally his treachery and pretenses are uncovered, but he is signally successful in creating a legendary likeness of himself, his mythical great deeds and valor, which to his gullible countrymen identify him as a national hero. With the coming of peace, he turns petty highwayman, enlists several followers, who aid him in the robbery of rustic cottages, post-offices, and shops. His ignominious career at length is finished by a violent death. The story is splendidly written, intensely virile, but it is liable to prove a "dud" to readers who have not, either through knowledge or predilection, a sympathetic familiarity with the people and struggles of new-born Erin.

QUEEN'S MATE. By PHILIP MACDONALD. Dial Press. 1927. $2.

The "Queen" who seeks a mate is Princess Sophonisba, related, through her father's second marital venture, to impoverished Slovene-Croatian royalty. Sophie is beautiful, twenty-four, intellectual, and the unique scheme which she devises for her capture of the ideal male has already eliminated some three-hundred candidates, reducing the number to a scant seven when the book's prologue opens. These surviving hopefuls, all high-born Britons of the "silly-ass" type, are summoned collectively to Sophie's Berkeley Square residence, and there are acquainted with the unusual conditions by which she is to be won: To that suitor who, in her judgment, submits the best original literary composition she will award her hand and fortune. There follow, at the rate of one read a week, the seven short stories entered for the prize—and very fair products they seemed to us—but in the epilogue our over-exacting Princess spurns them all as mediocre, refusing to pronounce a decision favorable to any entrant in the contest. A gentle "kick," not apt to be foreseen, is reserved for the closing pages.

THE COUNTERFEITS. By MARJORIE STRACHEY. Longmans, Green. 1927. $2.

To Adela Clifford the amorous intrigues of post-war England seem like an absurd parody on the fundamental drama of her earlier days as an army nurse in Russia. Constantly thrown back on memories for her emotional relief, she soon realizes that this is to dwell in a world of illusion, unless it is the genuine past with which she occupies her thoughts. Holding up truth, therefore, as the sole criterion, she reconstructs her affair with Boris Galkin, to find his charms entirely depreciated, as soon as she comes to a full realization of his self-ishness. On the other hand, Captain Hope, dull as he is, emerges from the process of retrospection with all his quiet virtues gleaming. At the very end of the book, when Adela encounters the captain again in London, we are led to believe that with this one solid element from the past she will succeed in building a stable future.

The mechanics of Miss Strachey's interesting idea are managed very capably; but never does the story mount to distinguished heights. If we choose to identify the author's point of view with that of her heroine, the reason for this becomes apparent. She, no less than Adela, seems frankly bored with London society: and hence her picture of it is flat. Even her attitude toward passion on the Russian steppes is a disappointingly quiet one.

THE SORROWS OF ELSIE. By ANDRÉ SAVIGNON. Translated by R. J. Dingle. New York: Payson & Clarke. 1927. $2.

This is a mystical, frequently incoherent narrative of the struggles of an English girl with the problem of sex. Her endeavor to find a "savior" in the perfect man, but symbolizes that constant search for higher values, which, according to M. Savignon, is characteristic of woman in general. It is a nice compliment to the *beau sexe*, though one more convincingly expressed in Rodin's piece, "The Centauress," where the female torso is represented as attempting to tear itself loose from its equine lower parts.

The sole test of such an unconventional method as we see in the book at hand, where supernatural elements are freely implied, lies in the accuracy and force with which the central ideal records itself upon the reader's mind. For the reviewer, M. Savignon has not been especially effective. To the former it was definitely a mistake to introduce into the earlier part of the story sufficient naturalistic detail to make the very allegorical tone of the second part strike a discord; although the latter considered by itself, remains a somewhat colorful and vigorous piece of writing. In the final section of the novel, the course of events between Horrick and Elsie is managed as any second-rate realist who was interested in love among the lower classes would manage them; that is to say, as dully as possible.

THE DEVIL'S GUARD. By TALBOT MUNDY. Bobbs-Merrill. 1926. $2.

Mr. Mundy writes a mystery novel surrounding a mystic cult in Thibet. The story is vigorous and exciting when his characters are in action. But in the frequent passages where he attempts to make them talk and think it is as complete a soporific as recent fiction can provide. The mystery, like the cult, fails to satisfy. Perhaps this is because the author himself does not appear to know just what it is that he has to conceal. In any case he makes no revelations sufficient to justify the protracted suspense of his three-hundred pages and even the kind of reader who is willing to stretch some points for the sake of a howling mystery will probably feel himself cheated at the end. We like the character who tries to justify his roguery by saying that "the world is no oyster for a failed B. A. with a brown skin and no capacity to be a hypocrite;" and Mr. Mundy's strong, silent American hero is also attractive.

THE HAPPY TREE. By ROSALIND MURRAY. Harcourt, Brace. 1927. $2.50.

The sensitiveness and restraint of Rosalind Murray's beautiful book evoke the image of some such piece of Greek art as the Orpheus relief in the Villa Albani. And this is not because the author happens to be the daughter of Gilbert Murray, but because the artless artifice of her work suggests so much more than it actually thrusts before us.

The woman who is supposedly writing this record of her uneventful life says when she has finished, "I was happy when I was a child, and I married the wrong person, and someone I loved dearly was killed in the war—that is all." That is all, perhaps, on the surface, and the tragedy pulling like a restless undertow beneath is seldom more directly stressed. Yet pages filled with self-analysis and passionate encounters could make us no more conscious of "the pain of finite hearts that yearn."

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"A monumental book . . . as thorough a piece of productive scholarship as has been done in America; and Germany, where research into matters scholarly was invented, has little to show to surpass Professor Lowe's book in mastership of every detail . . . written with a glow that greatly inspirits one. Henceforth no one need hope to speak authoritatively of Coleridge—if, indeed, any one dare speak of him at all—without first reading this all-embracing work."—*The New York Times Book Review.*

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and there are many minor incidents—such as the heroine's sudden distaste, almost on the eve of her wedding, for the man she is about to marry—that are admirably realized. Her last meeting with the cousin she loved so dearly is unforgettable. At times, to be sure, the simplicity of the telling seems a little unworthy of the high intellectual level of the whole; at times the heroine—who is after all a woman writing on her fortieth birthday—appears curiously naïve and remote. For the most part, however, the unaffected naturalness of the style gives the book a poetic quality and an atmosphere of sincerity that contribute not a little to its charm. And throughout there is a continuity of mood—a wistful tenderness and a mellow delicacy of feeling—that readers who are properly attuned will find irresistibly appealing.

THE PATH OF THE SUN. By R. W. ALEXANDER. Appleton. 1927. $2.

The prelude of this south sea adventure story briefly sketches the life and death of Captain Jamie Ferguson, an immensely rich island trader, who securely hides his fabulous wealth before he enters eternity. We next encounter "Monkey" Arnold, a desperate gun-runner, as he is escaping from five years' confinement in a Mexican prison, and share with him a perilous voyage to Polynesia. There one finds old Ferguson's nephew, come to track three ruffians whom he suspects of having murdered his late uncle. The activities of all these people, including the inevitable brave girl, thereafter center in the hunt for Ferguson's missing treasure. While utilizing many familiar properties, the tale is written in a vastly better style than is common to the majority of its kind.

THE GARDEN OF REDEMPTION. By WILLIAM E. ROYDEN. McBride. 1927. $2.

Twelve years prior to the opening of this gracefully written, fanciful romance, a young prince of a central Europe empire (presumably pre-war Austria-Hungary) is exiled, under a cloud, from his native land. Accompanied by his English secretary, he takes refuge in England, and later dies there. The secretary, James Herbertson, a gentle, kind-hearted, scholarly man, leads a solitary existence in a suburban villa near London. From this seclusion he is summoned by his chivalrous impulses and fidelity to the past to the protection of a titled mother and her daughter, natives of his late master's country and the persecuted victims of the prince's enemies. Herbertson intrepidly accepts the cruel challenge of these bitter foes, even offering the sacrifice of his life in payment for a pledge of amnesty to the women, his courageous struggle for the deliverance of the latter forming the balance of the tale. It is a smoothly flowing, attractive story, marred only by a decided and regrettable deterioration toward the close.

BEVAN YORKE. By W. B. MAXWELL. Doubleday, Page. $2.50.

In our judgment, a careful, meditative reading of Mr. Maxwell's new story is essential to a clear appreciation of the book's significance as a whole. For it is emphatically no tale for those who dip, skip, and hurry—rather it is for the leisurely, alert-witted connoisseur of fiction. The technical method employed is the difficult one which necessitates narration through the impressions conceived by one man of the acts and characters of the principals, all of whom are his friends and confidantes, he playing a minor, onlooker's rôle in the drama. Yorke himself is a distinguished Egyptologist, a man of letters, the soul of uprightness. But in his mid-forties he commits the vital error of falling in love with a temperamental, high-strung girl of twenty-four, Ursula Dibden. He has been long married to a devoted wife, is the father of three children, the bearer of a spotless, honored name.

The disclosure of his liaison with Ursula brings social disgrace and ostracism to Yorke, punishment suffered no less grievously by the girl, but merited in severity by neither of them. While conscientiously seeking to solve the problem of their relationship, the couple part, to meet at intervals, frequently and platonically. A divorce is planned, reluctantly agreed to by Yorke's wife, but is endlessly deferred by the conflicting, unreasonable procrastination of all involved. At length, from the entangled multitude of incidents, too voluminous to be detailed, there is worked out a conclusion, not wholly tragic, nor lacking in elements of consistency. To merely casual observation the book may seem formless, hard to read, too heavily fraught with implication and indirectness of import, but study of it reveals its masterly fineness in both design and accomplishment.

THE GHOST BOOK. Designed by CYNTHIA ASQUITH. Scribners. 1927.

Miss Asquith has gathered together in this volume sixteen stories by various hands, some of much distinction, which form an impressive mass of evidence that the ability to write the spectral thriller has not by any means passed from the English.

Yet all of these can hardly come under the head of "thrillers." Some are mere atmospheric fantasies. There are several with a decided touch of humor. The variety, however, is refreshing.

For sheer "scariness" this reviewer elects Mr. L. P. Hartley's "A Visitor from Down Under." The atmosphere created in May Sinclair's "The Villa Desirée" is also remarkable, though the point of her story seems decidedly far-fetched. Mere sensualists do not strike us as the obvious instruments of this particular quality of fright. This is a girlish notion. Algernon Blackwood, in "Chemical," demonstrates his usual power; he conveys the shudder. Mrs. Belloc Lowndes disappoints. "The Duenna" is scattered in effect. Hugh Walpole narrates in burly fashion a not distinguished ghost-tale. Walter de la Mare, as usual, tantalizingly avoids explanations while building beautifully eccentric atmosphere. Clemence Dane creates a lovely spell with poignant power. "Munitions of War" is average Arthur Machen, neatly turned. D. H. Lawrence writes with feeling of the preposterous and, as usual, creates vividly. The excitement of the old "something for nothing" is the force of "The Rocking-Horse Winner," though it is memorable. Enid Bagnold's "The Amorous Ghost" is excellently wrought and original, one of the best. Mary Webb precipitates the illusion of her story with an almost comic-paper explanation. "The Lost Tragedy" by Denis Mackail and "The Corner Shop" by C. L. Ray both deal with bookselling, the former being quite an obvious trifle, the latter more ingenious. The second of "Two Trifles" by Oliver Onions is deliberate and successful farce. Desmond MacCarthy gives one a really gruesome thrill in "Pargiton and Harby," while Charles Whibley simply tells an antiquarian anecdote in "Twelve O'Clock."

Thus we pigeonhole the exhibits. The book as a whole is a most interesting collection, presenting some distinguished writing.

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WHERE THE WATERS TURN. By *Theodore von Ziekursch.* Macrae Smith Co.

COPY 1927. Selected by *Helen Hull.* Appleton. $2.

ONCE IN THE SADDLE. By *Eugene Manlone Rhodes.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.

THE MUSING WANDERER. By *Anton Gross.* Boston: Roxburgh Publishing Co., Inc.

THE MARIONETTE. By *Edwin Muir.* Viking. $1.75.

RED PANTS. By *John W. Thomason, Jr.* Scribners. $2.50.

THE LOVELY SHIP. By *Storm Jameson.* Knopf. $2.50.

TOM AND JERRY. By *O. J. Boulden.* Dorrance. $2.

FINDINGS IS KEEPINGS. By *John Boyd Clarke.* Clode. $2.

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ROAD END. By *Woods Morrison.* Putnams. $2.

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE. By *Virginia Woolf.* Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.

THAT ISLAND. By *Archibald Marshall.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

THE GOOSE-FEATHER BED. By *E. Temple Thurston.* Doran. $2.

THE STORY OF CALIFORNIA. By *Stewart Edward White.* Doubleday, Page. $2.50.

WORKING BULLOCKS. By *Katharine Susannah Prichard.* Viking. $2.

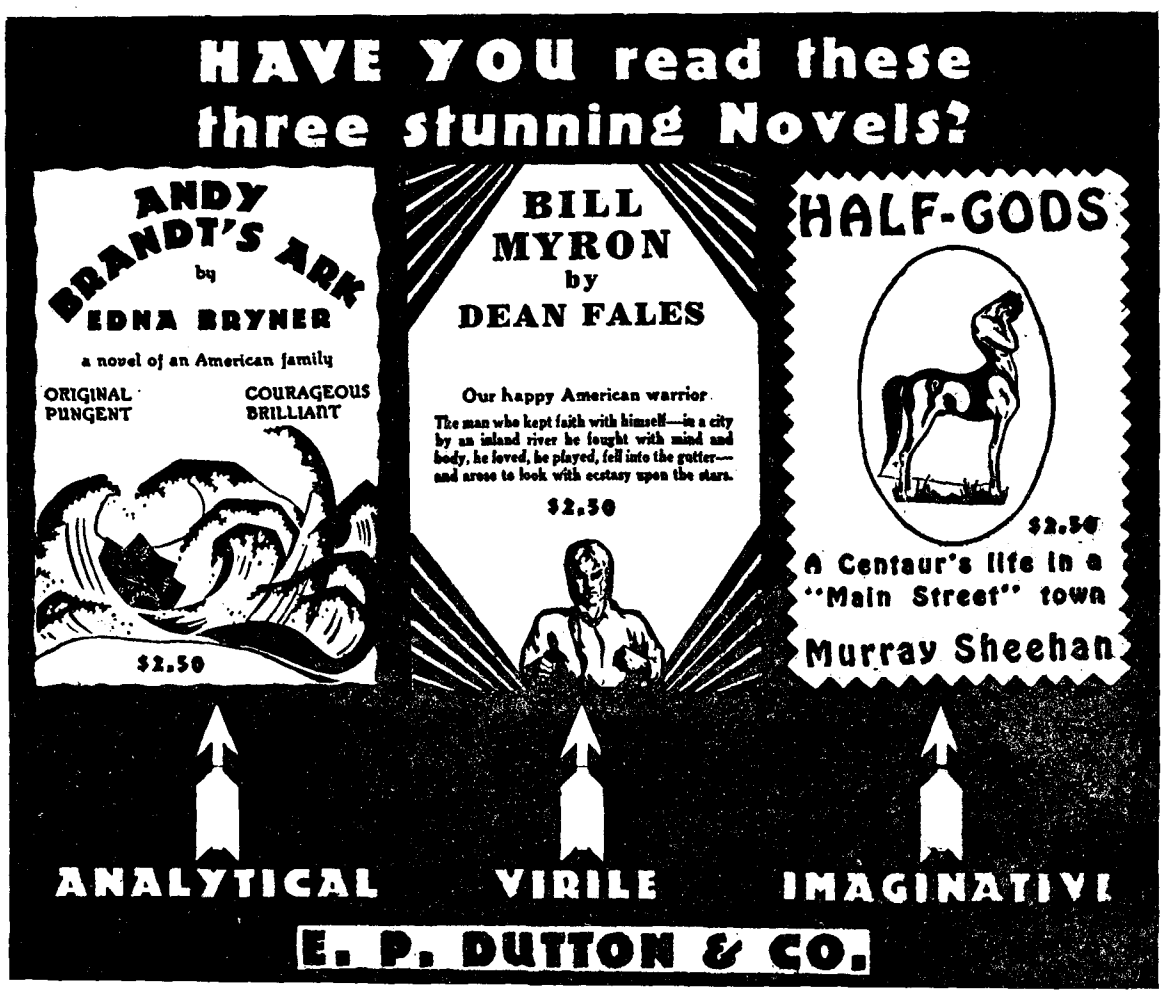
THE MADONNA OF THE SLEEPING CARS. By *Maurice Dekobra.* New York: Payson & Clarke, Ltd. $2.50.

THE GIRL FROM RECTOR'S. By *George Rector.* Doubleday, Page. $3.

CALL OF THE HOUSE. By *Ruth Comfort Mitchell.* Appleton. $2.

THE BLACK VIRGIN AND OTHER STORIES. By *Olga Petrova.* Four Seas.

(*Continued on page* 831)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Points of View

Decadence

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

From time immemorial revelation has come down to men in chaste phraseology. Inspiration has implied eloquence; and when the prophet committed his message to writing the divine afflatus extended to the theurgy of words. Instinctively men have sensed that the truths of God should be clothed in language's richest garb. So the sacred books of the world have easily become classics.

Hebrew is a well-nigh untranslatable language, yet even through the medium of an indifferent rendering into English we are fairly overpowered by the simple majesty and beauty of certain passages of the Old Testament. Nor can we conceive of the stories of Jesus, which his early disciples have given us, being set down in less appealing, realistic, ingenious prose than that in which they stand; in the original *koina* (everyday Greek) or the modified Anglo-Saxon of the King James Version. In later centuries Augustine composed his "City of God" and "Confessions," Anselm his "Cur Deus Homo," and Aquinas his "Summa" in Latin, not of golden classic Rome, indeed, but that may be compared to hammered silver for the care and skill with which it is manipulated. They say that Luther made the German language. He was certainly a good enough writer to do it. Universal literature counts "Pilgrim's Progress" among its dozen most valued treasures. French prose before and since has often reached high levels, but there is little chance that a more perfect French prose will ever be written than Renan's "Vie de Jésus." Dante and Milton, distinctively religious poets, are poets of the first rank. Taken all in all, the writers of the past who "could not free themselves from God" have not been able, or have not dared, to employ commonplace language and literary forms.

How is it in our own time? This is to be my criticism and thesis.

Publishers' "readers" and magazine editors mingle their tale of the flood of submitted manuscripts with which they are one and all being overwhelmed with the complaint that such a small proportion of these manuscripts are in any real sense religious—they are just now facing, remember, an insistent demand for religious reading matter—and that those that are are of such inferior quality. Even so, the output of religious publications strikes one as being heavy. I sample it, cursorily in libraries and book shops, more conscientiously for the purpose of review and for my personal profit. And now this is what I find, and my problem, and the thing that is troubling me: Why is it that nowadays when people write about religion, or write religious books, essays, and poetry, they do it so poorly; carelessly, if not slovenly; and without the labor, skill, and polish that the makers of secular literature employ?

Comparisons are unfair, nor am I going to reflect upon worthy Christian writers, some of whom I admire and some of whom are my friends; so I will mention only parties of the second part; but it is discouraging and depressing to turn from the finished, masterful prose of such writers as James Branch Cabell, Aldous Huxley, or Llewelyn Powys, whom one is justified in labelling "irreligious," to the religious books that are being offered us. The name of the editor of *The American Mercury* is coming to be an irritant to the church in this country and Great Britain. Might one advise that the way to keep people from reading Mr. Mencken is not to anathematize him in the pulpit and religious weekly, but to give the reading public something equally as bright, suggestive, and readable, but that shall represent Christianity and not paganism? Our young people will not give up *College Humor* until you put into their hands a magazine that shall be not merely less vulgar and more moral, but just as full of life, entertainment—pep, they would say—and modernity.

The novel is the present-day medium of propaganda, or if you want to put it in that way, of teaching. Everything under the sun, truth, untruth, and half-truth, is being handed out by this medium. Why shouldn't the church use it? Manifestly she doesn't. One can't think of a decent religious novel that has appeared in the last twenty years. Scarcely a religious short story. It is Chesterton, I believe, who adds to the common statement that Jesus was the greatest storyteller that ever lived, "but he has had no successor among his followers." Chesterton was forgetting Dante and Bunyan, at least. Is the great Christian church of the twentieth century unable to produce a writer capable of driving home through a masterpiece of a story the truth as that church sees it in the gospel of Jesus? I don't mean a slushy, sentimental, nambypamby, falsely-colored romance, but a novel of strength, beauty, and appeal, constructed according to the newer canons of literary art. I suspect that the publishers and book dealers are longing for such a book, and I know that a dozen million Christian readers are. They'd swing it into the best-seller class mighty quick! But if it isn't forthcoming—or several of them—we shall go on reading the books that are—well, not altogether bad, but which in many ways run against the grain of the faith that we cherish.

The most pertinent criticism of current religious publications has already been hinted at: They are distinguished by a hasty, careless workmanship. When literary ability and genius do manifest themselves their value is frustrated by neglect; and a neglect of the matters that go to the making of either real literature or marketable books: infinite painstaking; intelligent construction; beauty of form—and features; merciless excision; meticulous revision; a studied avoidance of dulness; a stiff fight for the reader's attention—I mean. The pronounced successes in secular literature are all being gained in just this and in no other way. Real books don't happen—they are the result of hard work. We assume, indeed, that the Holy Spirit will liberally assist the religious writer; but that will not make superfluous these other things that have been enumerated.

An examination of the more recent religious books reveals two illuminating facts: They are pretty much all by clergymen and theological seminary professors, and they are mostly collections of sermons or addresses. There is no particular reason why ministers shouldn't write books, especially religious books; but there are many reasons why they should not be the only ones to do it. The church assuredly does not lack literary laymen. The minister has hard work to get away from sermonizing, and a sermon is not a book. It cannot even be made over into an essay, if it wasn't one in the first instance. Preaching is speaking, not writing. It is a well known fact that many great sermons are poor stuff when printed. A preacher's friends and parishioners are glad to have in permanent form some of his discourses; but this making books of them is on the whole a dubious business. The majority of such volumes reach the junk shop, by way of the second-hand dealer, at an early day.

It should be noted, by way of exception, that some such collections, originally delivered as sermon series or courses of lectures, possess a coherence that makes them real books. Or they may have been woven into book form in revision, or by rewriting. Dr. Fosdick and Dr. Jefferson, and Bishop Gore and Dean Inge, of Great Britain, for example, are skilful in doing this and sometimes their readers forget that the chapters originally lacked the unity of a book.

If this word is taken as a challenge to the men and women of the Christian church who can or could write—and do it exceptionally well—to produce, the question of profit and loss will be raised in rejoinder. The reported and reputed immense sale of the Fosdick books, "This Believing World," Bruce Barton's two "Nobody Knows," "The Christ of the Indian Road," and Papini's "Christ," or, to go farther back, "In His Steps" and "Robert Elsmere," should dispel the idea that the reading and book-buying public is indifferent to distinctively religious literature. It is also worth noticing that the Bible never ceases to top the list of the best-sellers. The point is, however, that the book submitted to the publisher and offered to the reader shall not be anywhere near mediocre; shall, if possible, be actual literature.

It will perhaps be submitted that the capable men and women of the church are too engrossed with its urgent and multifarious tasks to have time for superior literary composition. But is any task of the Christian job more important than this, more telling in its results—than the making of a good religious book, or story? For Christianity is a book religion. After all, the typewriter and the printing press are mightier than the pulpit, rostrum, or soap box. The radio reaches millions upon millions of listeners, but doesn't reach them so effectively as the printed page.

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The New Books

(*Continued from page 829*)

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ICELAND—A HANDBOOK. Edited by *Thornsteinn Thorsteinsson.* The National Bank of Iceland.

FRANCE ON TEN WORDS A DAY. By *H. McCarty Lee.* Simon & Schuster.

MY WILD FLOWER GARDEN. By *Herbert Durand.* Putnams.

WINE AND THE WINE LANDS OF THE WORLD. By *Frank Hedges Butler.* Brentanos. $4.50.

THE NEW AMERICAN CREDO. By *George Jean Nathan.* Knopf. $2.50 net.

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PROBATION AND DELINQUENCY. By *Edwin J. Cooley.* Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York, 477 Madison Ave. $3.

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THE ROAD TO PROSPERITY. By *George Paish.* Putnams. $2.

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THE DARVISHES. By *John P. Brown.* Edited by H. A. Rose. Oxford University Press. $6.

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Poetry

FLYING FISH. By GRACE HAZARD CONKLING. Knopf. 1926. $2.

These poems of Mrs. Conkling's will not materially alter her poetic reputation. They are quiet, decorative, rather timidly, yet sincerely felt and they do not offer any particularly individualized reactions to experience. She tends to content herself with well wrought descriptions—

Let us dip honey out of a deep jar
And hold it to the light and find it clear
Tasting it slowly to discern its mere
Wildness from petals now of cinnabar
And now of coral . . .

Too much of what she writes glides along at this innocent level. It is pleasant verse of the mildest purpose by one who generally does not distinguish things observed with pleasure from things observed with passion. Like most women poets of today, Mrs. Conkling never feels ideas, but only things concrete. Her imagery most often exists for its own pictorial sake and admits very few secondary references. In spite of their verbal glitter and metrical grace her poems seldom rise above the physical plane.

DEW AND BRONZE. By *Robert P. Tristram Coffin.* A. & C. Boni. $1.50.

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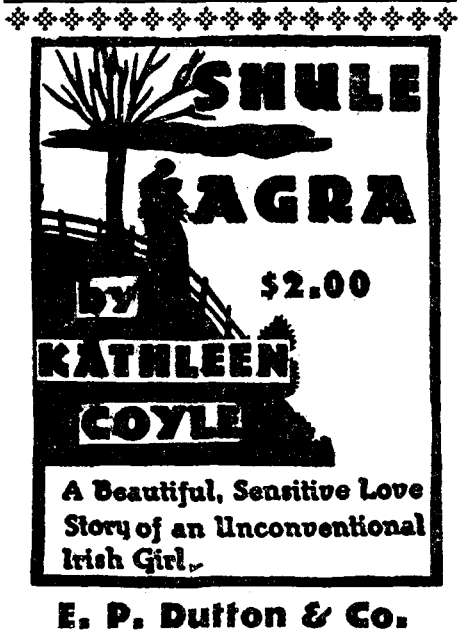

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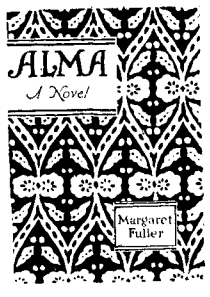

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The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Travel

ADVENTURING. By ADAM BREEDE. New York: Frederick H. Hitchcock. 1927. $3.

To stories of trips around the world there is no end. One of the latest goes by the title of "Adventuring" and is told by Adam Breede, owner and editor of the Hastings (Nebraska) *Daily Tribune.* The itinerary takes the author to Europe, via the Mediterranean, thence to Africa, east to India, China, and Japan, and finally to the Hawaiian Islands, but by some strange manipulation of chapters, the reader is then rushed to South America, carried north again to Seattle, and deposited for good in Alaska.

The author does not for a minute forget that he is an American "globe-trotter," and the reader is reminded of the fact each time he comes to a paragraph like that in which the caged wolves on the Capitoline Hill are compared to Nebraska coyotes. Mr. Breede stops long enough at the fabled Italian Lakes to remark that Como is "a beautiful blue lake," and when he gets to Japan discusses the entire country in a chapter composed of a page and a quarter.

The only thing that redeems the book is the section on big game hunting in Africa. It is apparently the record of actual experience, and to those interested in this particular form of outdoor sport the chronicle is recommended.

LIONS IN THE PATH: A Book of Adventure on the High Veldt. By STEWART EDWARD WHITE. Doubleday, Page. 1926. $3.

It never rained but it poured lions on Mr. White's path. He does well, after writing eight high-powered chapters, to pause to reassure his readers that "it must not be hastily concluded that life at Nyumbo is all battle, murder, and sudden death." An additional caution not to take too figuratively a phrase on the jacket might also not be amiss. "Hunting with the long bow" has reference to his companions, Arthur Young and Dr. Saxton Pope, and their none-too-successful activities on this trip. Five lions were killed in the open with bow and arrow, but these feats were accomplished under exceptional conditions and always with the backing of rifles. "An unheard-of abundance of game, a proved weapon, skilled practitioners of that weapon—and yet negligible results." Negligible, after all, is a relative term. Mr. White's companions have five lion skins and an exploded theory, whereas his readers are the richer by one of the most amusing and exciting accounts of big-game hunting that have ever come out of Africa.

THE FURTHER VENTURE BOOK. By ELINOR MORDAUNT. Century. 1927. $4.

Elinor Mordaunt has done it again. She has had another "venture" and has made it into "The Further Venture Book." It deserves a place on the shelves beside her earlier chronicle of amazing adventures, essayed alone, dauntless and undismayed.

Mrs. Mordaunt brings two qualities to her writing: a swift, glancing prose style and a high enthusiasm for the unusual, and as an entertaining raconteur of untoward experience she has few compeers. The present volume finds her in the South Pacific and such names as Fiji, Papua, Java, Ceylon, and Malacca take on new significance for the reader as page after page of her infectuous travelogue is turned. "Mine is a quest of the little islands," she says by way of explanation, and goes on to tell why she finds them more interesting than the safe and sane Continents which have a way of smothering the "mental lungs." To travel in her company means travelling quickly, lightly, and with no preconceived notions as to what will be uncovered.

SILVER CITIES OF YUCATAN. By *Gregory Mason.* Putnams. $3.50.

A SATCHEL GUIDE TO EUROPE, 1927. By *William J. Rolfe.* Revised by William D. Crockett. Houghton Mifflin. $5.

THE LAND'S END. By *W. H. Hudson.* Knopf.

IN EUROPE. By *George S. Dougherty.* New York: The Avondale Press. $1.

HOW TO BE HAPPY IN PARIS WITHOUT BEING RUINED. By *John Chancellor.* Holt.

War

IS CONSCIENCE A CRIME? By *Norman Thomas.* New York: Vanguard Press. 50 cents.

WAR PATRIOTISM-PEACE. By *Leo Tolstoi.* New York: Vanguard Press. 50 cents.

WAR-CAUSE AND CURE. Selected Articles Compiled by *Julia E. Johnsen.* New York: H. W. Wilson Co. $2.40.

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The Saturday Review says that J. H. Wallis, author of

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is a "memorable" poet, a poet "of profound introspection." "Communicated Intensity" . . . "original turn" . . . "fascinating ratiocination" . . . "true sentiment" . . . are descriptive phrases used by the *Review.* Of one poem the *Review* says: "Were Thomas Hardy an American he could certainly have written 'The New Year' no better and would have seen the Broadway pageant at that time with the same eyes."

BUT the *New York Evening Post's* reviewer says: "Expecting so much, I was more disappointed."

The Saturday Review says the poems are written "with great clarity." *The New York Post* says they are "banal and obscure."

Someone errs ! ! !

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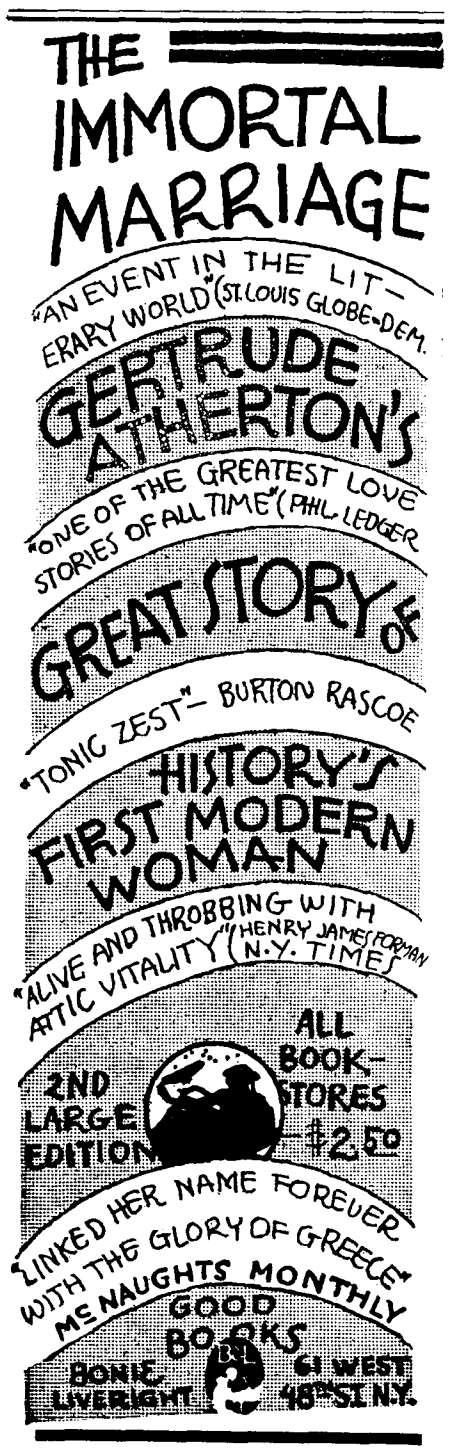
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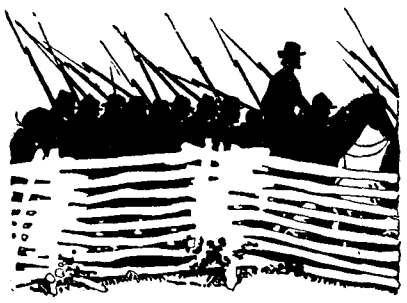

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.*

A BALANCED RATION

EARLY AUTUMN. By *Louis Bromfield.* (Stokes.)

THE RISE OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION. By *Charles A.* and *Mary R. Beard.* (Macmillan.)

THE INGENIOUS HIDALGO. By *Han Ryner.* (Harcourt, Brace.)

A. J. B., a student at Lehigh taking a course in Logic and Scientific Methods of Reasoning, must for a term-paper read a novel based upon some crime or mystery and trace the solving of that mystery according to a syllabus that he encloses.

IF I could arrange with someone to ask me such a question every two or three months, I would have a business reason for doing what I must now do on my own time—read all the new detective stories as rapidly as they appear. To reach this reply I went through four good ones before I came to just the one this man needs; in "Road's End," by Woods Morrison (Putnam), you read: "Had Dick kept to the road . . . they would have been spared many of the subsequent horrors that filled this night." There, when you meet a statement like this on page 306 of a novel you take a hitch in your breath and get your money's worth. But it is too-good movie-material to keep too slavishly to logic. In "A Secret of the Marsh," by Oliver Warner (Dutton), the central figures are all more or less mad, making it hard for syllogisms to keep up with them, let alone the ghostly complications. Once Lilian Bamberg's "Beads of Silence" (Dutton), gets past the initial handicap of jewels stolen from an idol—this is on my Index Expurgatorius for detective stories, along with strange inventions, butlers who do the murder, and conspirators whose names end in off—it gets along swiftly to an unexpected solution. I must reveal this much of it—the murders are committed by a man who is so crazy over "happy endings" that he removes anyone who stands in the way of one. Plusoptimists take notice.

The best detective story of this year, "The Three Taps," is by the author of last year's best one, Ronald Knox (Simon and Schuster publish both). The taps are gas-taps, and the case in which they figure is investigated on behalf of an insurance company. The only thing that might disqualify it for this student's use is that he is presumably studying for the law, and there is practically no hope that as a criminal lawyer he would be on a case in which the conversation would be so consistently bright. I suppose I had better stick to my old favorite, Freeman Wills Crofts, who can always be trusted to turn out a steady sleuth-hound story, with none of Father Knox's airy attitude to "Scotland Yard, where the umbrellas go," but letting an honest square-toed inspector run down one false clue after another, proceeding by elimination interspersed with hunches. This makes a fat novel, too, not a bad feature in itself; the latest from Mr. Crofts is "The Ponson Case" (A. & C. Boni), and this is a nice fat one.

Of course if this student has not been doing his duty by current crime fiction, there is Agatha Christie's "The Mysterious Affair at Styles" (Dodd, Mead), that came out around Christmas time, and a beauty it is.

P. L. L., New York, asks for additions to his list of novels of American history, which now includes Weir Mitchell's "Hugh Wynne," Chambers's "Cardigan" series, Mary Johnston's "Prisoners of Hope," and "To Have and to Hold," James Boyd's "Drums," Ford's "Janice Meredith," Sabatini's "The Carolinian," Hergesheimer's "Balisand," and Churchill's "Richard Carvel."

FOR standard novels up to 1914, consult Baker's "Guide to Historical Fiction" (Macmillan), listing, by country and chronologically, five thousand volumes, and available in any public library. You might cast an eye over "The Reader's Guide Book" too, for this carries on American history novels to the date of its publication. One whose interests are like P. L. L.'s should read all that Mary Johnston has written: the latest is "The Great Valley" (Little, Brown), which runs through the Indian wars preceding the Revolution; "1492" and especially "The Slave Ship" (Little, Brown), must be on any such list. Meade Minnegerode's "Cockades" (Putnam), is a romance of the Lost Dauphin in America, introducing Jumel, Citizen Genét, and Aaron Burr; his "Cordelia Chantrell" (Putnam), is in Charleston before the Civil War. "The Holy Lover," by Marie Conway Oemler (Boni & Liveright), is the story of Wesley in Georgia; "The Land of Promise," by Margaret Lynn (Little, Brown), is bleeding Kansas just before the Civil War; Miss Lynn has made accurate pictures of this period in earlier novels. "Trail Makers of the Middle Border," by Hamlin Garland (Macmillan), tells in fiction form the part of his family record preceding the Middle Border stories. "Black Ivory," by Polan Banks (Harper), is a slave-smuggling story centering in New Orleans; Stephen Benét's "Spanish Bayonet" (Doran), is laid in Florida with a Revolutionary background and British colonists exploiting imported labor.

The stories of the opening of the Oregon country include "We Must March," by Honoré Willsie Morrow (Stokes), which culminates in Marcus Whitman's ride, and "On to Oregon" (Morrow), which has a boy-hero from history. "Forever Free," Mrs. Willsie Morrow's novel in which Lincoln is the central figure (Morrow), emphasizes his family life. In "Hearts of Hickory," by John T. Moore (Cokesbury), Jackson and Crockett appear. One might call Dane Coolidge's "Under the Sun" (Dutton), historical fiction, for it takes place in the Southwest of the 'sixties, but this exciting adventure story's chief interest is in its sympathetic presentation of Indian life, customs, and ceremonials.

The latest historical novel that I have read is James Boyd's "Marching On" (Scribner), and the temptation is to quote —but where to leave off? The Civil War does not begin in it until page 196, and yet I believe it to be the best novel yet written about the Civil War. Perhaps this may be because it has the color of stories I used to overhear when veterans would stop off between trains and fight their battles over with my father; perhaps it is because the hero is a poor man, almost a "cracker," which gives a new slant to its viewpoint on slavery, and perhaps it is because the love-story is not between the lines, but across social barriers: I have had just enough of these North-South romances of the 'sixties.

I have been tasting from the two bulky volumes of "The Rise of American Civilization," by Charles and Mary Beard (Macmillan), and longing for a chance to settle down with it long enough to read every word. This history is going on my vacation; I can tell already that it is a book I have been hoping for. So I suggest it to this inquirer, for it is as rapid reading as a novel.

H. H., New York City, asks if there is a book explaining the process of changing one's name to make the numbers in it more propitious.

NO doubt there are several, but the only one I have seen is among the newest books of the season, "Numbers: Their Meaning and Magic," by Isidore Kozminsky (Putnam), who wrote a book on the magic properties of precious stones that several of my acquaintances have borrowed from me and found enlightening. This new numerology book of his makes the subject clear to anyone with a turn for the incomprehensible. A certain guardedness in my remarks about this book is due to my reluctance to helping along this shuffling of signatures now so prevalent; it used to take a marriage ceremony or an act of legislature to change a name, and now all you have to do is to carve for yourself a new one whose vibrations run more smoothly. Between numerologists who shift their names and Lucy Stoners who can't be pried loose from them, life must be complicated for postmen.

D. S. F., New York, adds a book to the equipment of the man intending to visit the West Indies; "Tropic Death," stories by Eric Walrond (Boni & Liveright), saying that he read it last fall, and that when he went to the West Indies this January for the first time, found that it had prepared him for an appreciation of these islands that he feels he would have lacked had he not read it. It is only fair to warn squeamish readers that these are not stories for the tender-minded; their power, however, nobody could deny.

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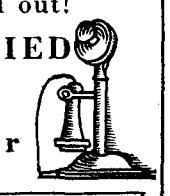

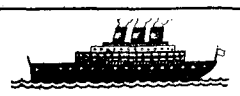

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The Phoenix Nest

FIRST, of course, the Pulitzer Prize Awards. Leaving aside fiction, and with no desire to carp, what of *Carl Sandburg?* In 1926 Carl published two books, his "Abraham Lincoln" in two volumes, and his "Selected Poems." We understand that some peculiar codicil in the specifications of books available for the Pulitzer Prize makes automatic the rejection of biographies of Washington and Lincoln. Why, we do not understand. But, at that, in the field of biography, Carl's book was a whale. In the field of poetry, Sandburg stands as one of our half dozen leading poets. His selected poems, gathering together his best work out of many volumes, are certainly notable. In 1926 was published *Sara Teasdale's* "Dark of the Moon," the latest volume of poems by one who certainly stands as one of the four or five leading women poets of America, with a remarkable body of lyrical work to her credit. In 1926 appeared *Joseph Wood Krutch's* remarkable study of *Edgar Allan Poe.* Thus two biographies and two volumes of poems occur to us for mention in this connection. Their merits must have been fully weighed. They received no award. . . .

To one familiar with modern American poetry another name challenges attention. *John Gneisenau Neihardt*, whose "Collected Poems" were issued by Macmillan in 1926, is a poet of real achievement. His earliest work contains some fine lyrical passages, his earlier essays in the field of the poetic drama were of unusual interest,—but in his epics of the West, comprising, "The Song of Three Friends" (1919), "The Song of Hugh Glass" (1915), and "The Song of the Indian Wars" (1925), he accomplished a trilogy of sound historical value also notable for the high poetic level of its narrative verse. The last of the trilogy, particularly, took superb advantage for the first time, in poetry, of some of the rich material latent in the dramatic making of the West. This can be fairly called remarkable achievement. It is intensely native. Mr. Neihardt has also published an unusually fine long essay on "Poetic Values" and a volume of prose, "Indian Tales and Others" of true creative power, as well as an unusually interesting work on the Missouri River. Since his first small volume was brought out in 1907 he has developed through twenty years of assiduous study of his own section of the country, and the creative applications of this study, into a writer some of whose work is positive to endure. And that is as much as may be said of any. If he is not a poet in line for the Pulitzer Award, there is no such poet in our States. His "Collected Poems" was before the judges. It included the revised work of twenty years, as we have said, crowned by a series of narratives of epic significance. . . .

The latest question game to be originated, out tomorrow, is one made up by *Samuel Hopkins Adams*, with no *kudos* originally in mind. On Mr. Adams's visits to the offices of Boni and Liveright during the last year, he and *Horace Liveright*, with *Donald Friede* and *Maurice Hanline*, played a game which Mr. Adams introduced, and which consisted of Mr. Adams as the interrogator describing some famous person in history or contemporary life, the description being so hidden in a maze of paradoxes that it required ingenuity on the part of the Liveright office to discover who Mr. Adams was pretending to be. In the course of his various visits Mr. Adams must have appeared in the guise of at least a thousand people. The game which has now taken the form of a book is entitled "Who and What? A Book of Clues for Clever People." . . .

Isabel Fiske Conant sends us an interesting little brochure of *hokku* written by the members of her poetry class at the Scoville School. *Joseph Auslander* chose the title for it, "Iron Moths." Since about the sixteenth century the outstanding poem-form in Japanese literature has been the *hokku;* the three-lined, unrhymed poem of seventeen syllables in the order 5, 7, 5. These, by young ladies of fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen years of age, are interesting and charming. . . .

We acknowledge receipt of the student-written number of *The Scholastic*—the contributions to this annual issue being by high school students all over America, in prize contests in the fields of art, the short story, the essay, dramatization, and in the Witter Bynner poetry contest. . . .

Since the *Snyder-Gray* case woke special interest in jurymen, "Impressions of an Average Juryman" by *Robert Stewart Sutliffe*, (Appleton), may be mentioned as timely. *Randall Le Bouef*, former Justice of the New York Supreme Court, remarks of it, "The best thing I have ever seen on juries." . . .

We thank *Maude Radford Warren* for the following letter upon *T. E. Lawrence*:

Touching the 57th line of your April 30th *Phoenix Nest*, I am not so sure that women don't exist for T. E. Lawrence. He may not look on them with a soldier's eye, as he once looked on Turks, especially Turks crossing bridges which he knew would presently blow up. But he understands how to be polite to them. While he was still fellow at All Soul's, Oxford, before he had become an aeroplane mechanic, an adorable Irish girl (since married to a New Yorker) and I lunched with him. Due to the Irish girl, who would truly charm the birds off the bushes, he asked us to stay to tea. His blue eyes were mainly as impassive as marbles. But now and then, when he looked on the wild-rose face of the Irish girl, they were not. Then in came another girl whom T. E. Lawrence was evidently not expecting, but his eyes were not marbles as he greeted her. If the Irish girl was a wild-rose, this girl was a gardenia.

I happened to have heard in Bagdad from Gertrude Bell the outlines of various of his adventures not yet in print. He sat down on the floor and drew maps for us and filled in those outlines, now and then glancing up first at the wild-rose and then at the gardenia. His eyes were not granite then, soft perhaps, mild certainly, in keeping with his quiet voice, and the pleasant dark-panelled room, and the gentle hearth fire, but not in keeping with the wild tales. I cared more for those stories than for the expression in his eyes—and then he said to me (and there was marble in his voice), "All this is true, Mrs. Warren, but if you print it, I shall be obliged to deny it." I saw that for me the day would afford rather a pleasant memory than stuff for an article. Finally—the wild-rose girl and her husband have one of those very few undeleted British copies of Lawrence's famous book. Would that have happened if women didn't exist (in some shape) for him?

No, and we don't doubt that they do.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

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on the 1927 program are now being received. The first is THE LETTERS OF ELIZA PIERCE, a collection of unpublished eighteenth century letters of a young Devonshire heiress to her betrothed.

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When a book is released the publisher has his ears to the ground for news about its Consumer Acceptance. So that when the following two Items came from the Trade in one morning's mail, we were pleased:

Item 1. A Chicago bookstore writes that the 13 copies out of the first shipment of 25 were sold the first day.

Item 2. The Buyer of one of the biggest department stores in New England writes that there are a few typographical errors, and adds: *"With the necessary changes I feel you have by far the best book of its kind I have ever seen."*

And, oh yes, the title of the book: *France on Ten Words a Day.* Our advertising man uses the phrase "Even if you aren't sailing tonight on the *De Grasse* you will find this book an amusing way of spending $1.75." For an advertising man this is moderation indeed.

Ask the Concierge

(From FRANCE ON TEN WORDS A DAY)

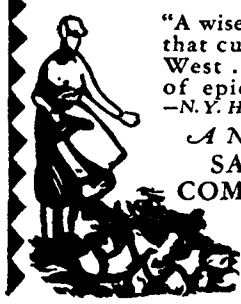
Casting editorial dignity to the winds, *The Sanctum* reproduces one of the illustrations. The book has twelve more like them, (drawn by PETER ARNO of *Whoops Dearie* fame) and over 180 pages of text showing you how to talk and gesticulate French like a Ten Year Resident.

Each mail brings in dozens of requests for a brochure on *Arthur Schnitzler*, which we have just published. A copy of it will be sent to any reader of *The Inner Sanctum* upon receipt of four cents in stamps. It is an intimate record of the man and his work, written in Vienna by one of our editors.

For the past two months F. GREGORY HARTSWICK (one of *The Cross Word Puzzle Book* editors) has been working on a book entitled *Guggenheim.* We do not look to this book to replace Cross Word Puzzles, but it has many interesting home-wrecking possibilities. *Guggenheim* is an old parlor favorite of the cognoscentia. More any minute now.

—ESSANDESS

SPEAK *to the* EARTH



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HIGH CONRAD PRICES

THE collection of first and rare editions of Joseph Conrad's writings formed by his friend Richard Curle was sold at the American Art Galleries on April 28, 234 lots bringing $38,512. While the collection contained none of Conrad's major manuscripts, it was extraordinarily complete in his published writings and of unique association interest. The highest price, $2,225, was paid by Dr. Rosenbach for the first issue of the first edition of "Chance," published in 1913, of which it is said that about fifty copies were put in circulation. The original autograph manuscript of "Christmas Day at Sea," written in ink on one side of ten quarto sheets, sold for $1,650. An autographed copy of "Almayer's Folly," the novelist's first book, realized $1,200; a presentation copy of the first, privately printed trial edition of "Some Reminiscences," $1,050; an autographed copy of the first edition of "Lord Jim," $1,000; an inscribed copy of the first edition of "The Mirror of the Sea," $950; an autographed copy of "Romance," $925; and the first edition of "Twixt Land and Sea," $800. These are extraordinary prices for an author who published his first book in 1895 and whose full recognition is so recent.

FACSIMILE OF A RARE BOOK

THE first American edition of Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" was published in 1866 by D. Appleton & Company, of this city. The same firm now after the lapse of more than sixty years has brought out a facsimile reprint, bound in red muslin, with gilt edges. The original format with the Tenniel illustrations was happily conceived and has been deservedly popular. The first edition is excessively rare and brings a high price, and this reprint will undoubtedly receive a warm welcome among booklovers. The circumstances under which the American first edition was published are related in a foreword to this reprint. William Worthen Appleton happened to be in London at the time of its first appearance. He was captivated with the book and immediately purchased a large part of the first edition, which the English publisher was glad to sell because both author and artist were dissatisfied with it. They were begging for a new revised edition of the work, the sale of which had been a disappointment. The early sales in this country were quite as disappointing as in England. Suddenly and unexpectedly the book found its market and the supply was quickly exhausted. In the years since, this story has been issued in many formats and illustrated by different artists, but the Tenniel illustrations have never lost favor.

A PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW

IN the last decade, during which the Britwell Court Library was being dispersed at Sotheby's, English opinion about American collectors has been going through a transformation. In the sale of the earlier parts there was little respect and much bad feeling shown toward American buyers. At its conclusion a great change is apparent. The London *Times*, in discussing American competition, takes the following broad and philosophical view:

"The American claim for its share in the literary heritage of Great Britain is undeniable and unanswerable; and it is perhaps better for rare books to be in American libraries where they may be seen and examined than to remain almost unknown and quite inaccessible in private libraries in England. During the past quarter of a century or so, American bibliographers have done a vast amount of valuable spade work in English bibliography, and the acquisition of a greater portion of the unexplored treasures of Britwell Court will greatly tend to increase this activity; so we have at least some consolation in witnessing the wholesale exportation to the United States of our literary treasures."

NOTE AND COMMENT

THE Centaur Bookshop's "Broadside for Spring" listing the more important publications, has the same distinction typographically that has characterized its predecessors.

A copy of Fenlon's "Les Aventures de Telemaque," 1785, recently brought 161,000 francs at a sale at Hotel Drouet, Paris. This is a two volume royal quarto edition with the imprint, "Paris: De l'Imprimerie de Monsieur," printed on vellum paper, with seventy-two plates after Monnet by Tilliard, unique in that it included twenty-five unpublished drawings in sepia de la Barbier which have never been engraved.

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